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EDITORIAL

FORCE of circumstance has compelled me to revert to my quarterly review of records which will be included in the April number. I feel less guilty than I should, because so many readers have written to say that they prefer the quarterly review, and of course it does possess obvious advantages over the monthly review. Yet I must admit that the prospect alarms me, for in the whole history of the gramophone there has never been a quarter so rich with good things as this one. For instance, when I was in town I heard one or two sides of the Columbia issue of Berlioz' *Fantastic Symphony*, and even that superficial hearing told me that perhaps the absolutely best recording yet achieved had been given us. Then there are the Columbia piano records of Percy Grainger in the third Chopin Sonata. On my new H.M.V. machine well placed I would defy anybody to say it was played on the gramophone. From H.M.V. there are some wonderful choruses, and from the latter I had time to hear bits of a superb *Kreutzer Sonata*. Parlophone and Vocalion, too, have been issuing and will be issuing records of the highest merit. But I must ask for another month's grace before my raptures seek

prosaic expression. My old enemy neuritis has been having a great time with me, and I am writing these words with daggers running into me all the time. To anybody in physical pain I commend the *Trout Quintet* in the January bulletin of Columbia. Were there ever so many simple and lovely melodies crammed into one piece of chamber music before? I doubt it. I have had it played to me over thirty times since it came out, and all my life I shall associate that quintet with the book I have just finished writing, that quintet and the two *Rasoumovsky Quartets* of Beethoven we possess on the gramophone (one an H.M.V., the other an N.G.S. production). I began "Fairly Gold" on October 25th. I finished on January 31st. It is nearly 200,000 words long, and I owe the courage to stick to my chair for ten hours a night entirely to the gramophone. I read that Mr. Filson Young (who nowadays is devoting a good deal of time and much graceful prose to boosting Rolls-Royce motor-cars) gave evidence at the B.B.C. committee against the gramophone. Apparently he thinks that wireless reproduction is less mechanical than gramophonic reproduction. It is idle to reason with such wrong-

headedness; it is uncharitable to rebuke it too harshly. Prayer is our only hope. *Ergo, fratres, orate pro mente emendata Filsoni Iuvenis ut errores suos infelices percipiens nobiscum delectationem fructuosam tandem communicet.*

The success of the Lifebelt has been a great personal pleasure. Very few of the faithful have been deluded, and those few that have must, I think, blame their instruments rather than me. The general consensus of opinion in the many letters we have received was in exact accord with my own observations. In the *Daily Telegraph* of February 13th a correspondent of Mr. Robin Legge's stated, according to him with the support of Captain Barnett, that the Lifebelt was only of value so far as it corrected alignment. This is utter nonsense. There is one machine, and one machine only, that I know with absolutely perfect alignment. That is the Balmain, and it is on the Balmain of all others that the advantage of the Lifebelt is most manifest. I have been careful not to claim too much for the little gadget, but I am not going to allow rubbish written about it to pass uncorrected. What it does it does by adding something more than correct alignment, and for my part I am convinced that Mr. Balmain's theory of flexibility is the right one.

While I was laid up in bed recently I had an opportunity of hearing all the newest recordings on my table Orchorsol, and very remarkable indeed was the result, *but* there were moments when the small sound-box could not deal with the bass, and when, as so many owners of small sound-boxes have discovered, there was positive danger of the needles getting, as it were, enmeshed in the bass even to the extent of ploughing up the record. I was just going to warn the Orchorsol people about this when they told me that they had produced a new sound-box and tone-arm to deal with the difficulty, and I hope that next month I shall be able to announce a triumphant solution of the problem. Meanwhile, for old recordings the Orchorsol keeps for my ear all its old charm.

Now I must touch for a moment on what is undoubtedly the burning topic in the gramophone world—the cost of records. There are, I believe, one or two ways in which the companies might do something to meet the purchaser, but for the present I cannot offer the least hope of any really radical cut in prices. I do wish that something more could be done for the man who sinks 39s. on a symphony than providing him with an album. I cannot help feeling that he is entitled to the price of one record in six if he buys a complete work. I also remain unconvinced by the arguments of sales managers who assure me that it is impossible to do as publishers do and issue a spring and autumn list of announcements. But the only people who can reduce the cost of large works are the buyers.

Suppose, let us say, that three hundred sets of a quartet are sold at 32s. 6d., would twice as many be sold at 16s. 3d.? Not necessarily, and even if there were, the loss in present conditions would be even greater than it is at present. On the other hand, if ten thousand purchasers would buy at 10s. it is clear that there *would* be a profit. But where are these ten thousand purchasers coming from? Alas, we must face the bitter fact that if a Beethoven symphony could be issued complete for 5s. there would not be nearly ten thousand purchasers for it. So long as records remain fragile, heavy, difficult to store and pack, easily ruined, and at the mercy of the shellac monopoly, so long must they remain horribly expensive compared with books. I wonder how many of these good folk who rail at jazz understand that it is jazz and jazz only that enables them to have Beethoven symphonies even at 32s. 6d. And I wonder how many people realise what companies like the Parlophone and the Vocalion have to contend with in issuing magnificent records of great music at 4s. 6d. You who read these words of mine are all devotees of the gramophone. You have taken the trouble to learn that His Master's Voice is not the only maker of records in the world. But I can assure you that the man in the street has never heard of Vocalion records yet. I was a little sceptical of mass advertising before I became acquainted with the gramophone world. But I know now that only by mass advertising can a business hope to become universally known. There's only one way for you readers to help the cause of cheap records, and that is by the missionary spirit. You must proselytise, and proselytise, and proselytise. Not only must more people buy gramophones, but when they have gramophones they must be taught how to get the most out of them. I do not think that it should be necessary to offer a reward for missionary enterprise, and I have no doubt that most of you are fervid missionaries for the gramophone already. But when you convert a friend, do take the additional trouble to instruct him well. Do remember that merely advising somebody to buy a gramophone and recommending him to take in THE GRAMOPHONE is not enough. Be patient with the novice. Put up with his ignorance. Put up even with his "little learning." Do not think that you have converted anybody until you have seen him a considerable way along the road of salvation. Records *are* too expensive at present, and nobody is better aware of that than the recording companies. At the same time they do from time to time make most praiseworthy reductions, and they are much more alive to their responsibilities than any other business organisation in their ceaseless efforts to provide people with what they want.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

The Man who had Views on Music

By HILAIRE BELLOC

A PRIVATE person—a mere possessor of ears—who professes an opinion of his own upon music must be a little mad. I wouldn't say the same of painting, or even of architecture; for these arts are not in the keeping of experts as music is; for surely that distinction between the sacred guardians and the brutish public outside is the mark of the Divine Thalia; as it is not of Terpsichore and the other seven whose names I forget.

We are all of us free to give loud opinions on what we like in food and drink, and even in colour and dress; and as for the proclaiming private opinion in religion and politics, it is a sacred right, except to Mormons and Communists.

But when it comes to music the thing is patently ridiculous. What do you and I and the Past Grand Master know about music? We like a tune, we are stunned by too many instruments; and that is as far as we go. We can no more reach the heavens where the long-haired ones walk in beatitude than we can discuss Einstein.

In point of fact, very few people do show this extravagance. There is not one man in ten thousand who will make a fool of himself by exposing his ignorance here. We sit and let the gods talk. But I did come across one exceptional man who gave his views, and as there is always something funny about madness, at any rate in its earlier stages, I should like to describe him for you.

I only met him for an hour, but I got to know pretty well all that he felt upon the subject; and when you have heard what he felt, you will agree with me that he was a warning to others.

It was a long time ago. It was during the reign of those two remarkable brothers, Imre and Bolossy Kiralfy. I must say they managed popular places of amusement better than anyone has done since.

It was a summer night. He happened to be sitting next to me on a bench some hundred yards from the bandstand. The musicians had tackled a piece of Wagner. When I tell you that it was the *Pilgrims March* in *Tannhäuser* a soft light will enter your eyes. I recognised it; though I profess no more knowledge in music than any other of the herd. I recognised it because it was the seven hundred and forty-fifth time that it had swamped me; I carefully count them.

Well, as the first of the noise began, this companion of mine, only half seen in the darkness and hitherto to me utterly unknown, sprang up suddenly as though he had been stabbed. Muttering to himself, he hastened away in a direction which took him directly from the instruments and towards a place where, if I remember rightly, one smashed crockery with hard balls.

I saw at once that I had come upon something worth collecting. I took the risk and went after him. I am sorry to say that I insinuated myself into his acquaintance by a very abominable phrase. I said to him, "Oh, sir! You too suffer when you hear this thing?" He answered savagely, "Yes! by God." He then looked at me in the half light with some suspicion, but the pathos of my expression reassured him.

"I marvel," said I (in order to draw more from my specimen), "that people tolerate an attack of this kind."

"They like it," he hissed, between his teeth.

"I am not so sure," I said (though I had to take care to keep on the right side of him, for these cranks are jumpy and take argument for insult). "I think if you were to play them the best of Gluck's *Orpheus* they would respond."

He stopped suddenly, and looked at me with the expression of a man in exile who hears something of home.

"Do you think they would," he answered more softly. "Do you really think they know the divine from the bestial, and order from chaos, and sanity from corruption?"

"They," in complaints of this kind means the Public, the Plain Man, You and Me and the Boot-makers. The Cranks always divide the world thus into two enemy camps; their sublime selves and the degraded "They."

"Yes," I said, "I think most of my fellow-beings are more or less like myself in the matter."

He sighed profoundly, and added, "I hope you are right." Then, after a long pause which I would not interrupt, he said, "And Mozart?"

"Yes," I said, "I think the most of my fellow-beings would fall under enchantment if only they could hear Mozart."

"And would they know a better from the worse, or rather the more from the less divine from that composer?" he asked.

"No," said I. "I would not go so far as that; but I can tell you one thing for certain. The simpler the matter, the more it has a beginning, a middle, and an end, the more obvious and direct its form, the better food the plain man would find it."

He sighed again more deeply, and there was in his sigh an expression almost of repose; and he muttered, "Maybe—maybe—But I have not found it so." He sauntered on, and I at his side, until we heard an unmistakable sound, a metallic sound, coming from a great hall where the more abject of the well-to-do were eating chemical food. It was a

place called the Vitellius or the Brillat-Savarin or something of that kind. Thence came out into the night that unmistakable sound, the mark of our civilisation, the sound of a piano.

My poor companion passed his left hand hard and rapidly across his forehead and halted as in great pain. Then, with a suppressed cry, he groaned, "Oh come away! Come away! Let us come away!" It was a most touching appeal to our common mentality. It was the accent of a lonely soul in pain. I could not but companion him.

He moved off half left, looking nervously over his shoulder to make sure that he was not blundering again towards Wagner and the enormous gang of vast, brazen instruments which were projecting the soul of The Master into Earl's Court.

"It is a piano," I whispered. "Yes," he answered, also in a whisper, and with a shudder, "The *pianoforte*."

Here was a rich new vein, and I set out to exploit it; but though thick, and crushing many ounces to the ton it was short. "Damn it!" he shouted suddenly, "Curse it! Break it up with a hammer!"

"It is an unnatural idea, is it not?" I admitted. "Hitting all these noisy strings together, mechanically, inside a wooden box."

"It's bloody! It's damnable! It's hellish! It's torture!" Then he moaned, "There is no refuge. There is no asylum," and was still.

I knew he was wrong about that last point, but I was too careful to give him the name of any of them. Besides which, whenever you mention the town in which one of them stands, Hanwell for instance, people write to protest that you are spoiling their property.

He went on: "Wherever you go! Wherever you try and sleep! In every house you visit! In every hotel! Oh my God—my God!"

It was on the tip of my tongue to say, "Come! It's not as bad as all that," when I suddenly remembered another man of the same sort whom I had met in a distant country years ago, and who felt much the same about Jesuits. On my trying to soothe him he had rushed at me and tried to bite me. So I simply agreed with this chance companion and added my curses to his against the piano. It was no doubt wrong of me to calumniate that solace of so many lives, but I would run no risks, so I let him speak his fill. But when he had exhausted his hate, I said, "I wonder whether even that instrument might not be played in such a fashion as to be tolerable." He surprised me by the first sane thing I had heard from him.

"Three times in my life," he said, "I have experienced that miracle. Three times in my life I have heard a human hand moving upon this detestable, black and white machine by some enchantment actually producing beauty. Once was when I heard the great Paderewski following

the melancholy of Chopin before a small audience in a private room; and upon my soul you would have said that this gimerack thing of rosewood and wires was a human spirit in divine pain. I thought of my Majorca and of George Sand. I saw the already dying man, in winter, by the open windows of that old monastery in the Mediterranean night."

"And the other two times?" I asked him gently.

"They were both women," he said abruptly, and I pressed him no further.

After a little silence he volunteered, "Best of all the human voice. Of all human voices, best of all what they call (in their horrid jargon) the Contralto. Next best a single type unmixed; the violin (in good hands), the flute, the immemorial harp—even the bugle call. But when they clatter out their mixum-gatherums of clashing this and that by the hundred! Oh the intolerable Din!"—and here he began raving again.

I was getting a little tired of it—not so tired as you are, but still pretty tired. For, fond as I am of collecting funny beasts and storing them up in my memory, a short experience of each is enough for the purpose. They have a way of repeating themselves. Indeed, I have noticed that the great difference between the two extremes and the normal man—the difference, I mean, between the insane man or the stupid man and the normal man—is that the first two can only repeat a few things over and over again, while the normal man (as, for instance, Sir Humphrey Hodkin, Bart., D.S.O., of Dorington Park, Wilts, and 239, South Audley Street—Brooks' and the Travellers'—favourite occupation, golfing) will discourse on any number of subjects, every one of them to be discovered in the baser daily papers.

We had come to a part of the gardens where all sounds were modified into a distant roar, and even the music was not more intolerable than a half-forgotten tooth-ache of early youth. We sat down again for a moment, and, just as I was going to get up to say good-night to him and go, he said to me, "Do you know what I am going to do when I get out of this?" I did not interrupt him, for I thought the clue of the utmost value; once I knew what direction he was taking, I should be able to decide my own. "I am going," he looked at his watch, "to catch the night train for Southampton and get across to Havre. In two days I shall be among the High Hills of Aragon, listening to certain sounds which heal a man's soul: The noise of the torrent, and the quarter notes of the mountain singers, singing at evening in the barns, and the night wind in the forest." With that he was gone.

I think he was lying. I think he went back to his club, where music is forbidden, and then went back to his rooms and slept an uneasy sleep.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Gems from Half-Forgotten Operas—I.

MANY operas there are of comparatively modern date that have failed in this country, or perhaps have never been heard here at all, but which are still occasionally revived—perhaps as a tribute to the memory of their composers—in the land of their birth. I need not give a list of these semi-failures; but their names will readily be recognised in the operatic catalogues of the various gramophone houses, where they occupy a modest place in virtue of the fact that they have yielded a certain amount of grist for the mill of the busy singer in search of effective material.

Needless to say, these interesting *trouvailles* afford no real criterion of the merit or attractiveness of the opera as a whole. One can enjoy listening to a piece, or even to a selection, from an opera by an eminent musician like Verdi or Gounod, Bizet or Massenet, whereas sitting out a three-hour performance of the whole work may prove, for various reasons, little short of an infliction. I have tested this for myself in not a few cases where duty compelled, and, like the individual who was buttonholed by the Ancient Mariner, I had no choice but to obey. None the less, recollection of the cumulative result need never detract from the pleasure of listening to a bit of good music apart from its original surroundings.

I propose, therefore, to act as cicerone *after the event*, and ask my readers to stroll with me for a while along these unfrequented avenues, where our friends the opera-singers have been industriously performing the labour of excavation and rescue. As with a visit to Pompeii, we shall not be able to do it justice in a single promenade; but if the task prove in its way equally "repaying" as Baedeker puts it, we shall not think the time wasted.

EARLY VERDI.

Until he began to write the successes of his "second period," Verdi shared the responsibility for many failures with his librettists. They supplied him with "blood-and-thunder" plots; he wedded their highly-coloured language to music equally strenuous with the din of brass and vocal fortissimos. One of the earliest, *Nabucodonosor* (1842), was one of the noisiest, but at the time, one of the most successful. Titta Ruffo found in it an air for the Assyrian king which he thought good enough

for the gramophone; however, I have not yet heard it. It is probably not so effective as the one for the Babylonian priest, *Tu sol labbro de'veggenti* (H.M.V., 6434—A), sung by José Mardones, which I have listened to with a good deal of pleasure. This Spanish bass has an organ of sonorous volume and the kind of pontifical delivery that suits this music. If *Nabucco* drew attention to Verdi's talent, *I Lombardi*, in the following year, excited Italian admiration still more, and I am surprised that out of its many fine numbers only two or three have survived. I can only speak here of the splendid trio *Qual voluttà trascorrere* (H.M.V., D.M.126), magnificently sung by Frances Alda, Caruso, and Journet—a record that any collector might be happy to possess. Caruso dominating the entire piece, starts it with a sobbing *cantilena*, full of tears, touching and beautiful; then, towards the end, a succession of thrilling high C's from him and Frances Alda, as if winding up with a cascade of brilliant fireworks, with Journet booming in the background.

After *I Lombardi* came a real success in the shape of *Ernani* (1844), still popular with Latin audiences, though many years have slipped by since I heard Patti singing *Ernani, involami* at Covent Garden. Another opera, *Luisa Miller* (1849) was also given here for the *diva* in 1875, but did not meet with equal favour. A third, which came between the two, was *I Due Foscari* (1845), and, having proved a downright failure at Florence and Paris, never got so far as London. Nevertheless, an air from it figures in more than one list under the title of *O vecchio cor che batti*, and, as a specimen of the true Verdi style, I rather admire a sentimental rendering of it by Pasquale Amato (H.M.V., D.B.636), which may suggest to some how Caruso would have made it sound had he been a baritone. Others will prefer, maybe, to hear the illustrious tenor himself in a tremendous declamatory air, *Ah, la paterna mano*, from the later opera of *Macbeth* (1847), which he trolls forth with astonishing energy and in his characteristic flamboyant manner (H.M.V., D.B.118). It was precisely, as we shall see, in these half-forgotten Verdi operas that Caruso achieved some of his finest records.

The three triumphs of the master's second period were *Rigoletto* (1851), *Il Trovatore* (1853), and *La Traviata* (also 1853); and after these we come to

the first opera that Verdi wrote for the French stage, *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* (1855), which was never a real success either in Paris or Milan, where it was given at La Scala in 1856. It embodied an advance in many ways—notably greater refinement of style in declamation and orchestral scoring. The libretto, by Meyerbeer's *collaborateurs*, Scribe and Duveyrier, recalled "one of the bloodiest episodes of the ancient wars between France and Italy," and the two principal parts were created by two great singers, Sophie Cruvelli and Gueymard (the former of whom made a nine-days' sensation by disappearing from Paris with her future husband, just prior to the production, but turned up again in time for it). Still, neither the genius of Sophie Cruvelli, whom Adolphe Adam had admired so much in *Ernani*, nor that of Verdi, whose skill in writing the vigorous and passionate music demanded by his countrymen, the same able composer-critic had frankly pointed out,* could save *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* from the fate earned by an over-lengthy and tedious opera.

With the exception of the *bolero* in the last act, recorded, I may say, by Tetrizzini, the only big fish caught by the gramophone net from this much-debated score has been the famous bass air, *O tu Palermo*, the *cheval de bataille* of every popular basso whom I have encountered in my long experience of the Italian stage. The most notable records of it that have come under my notice are the following: by José Mardones (Victor-H.M.V., 6434—B), powerful, telling, always in tune; by Alexander Kipnis (Polydor, 65724), resonant, a trifle unwieldy when not agitated, but effective and provided with an elaborate final cadenza; by Malcolm MacEachern (Voc. K.05130), suave, sympathetic, restrained; and, in English, Norman Allin (Col. L.1553), sustained with a good body of tone and smoothly sung. Each of these has merit, but the MacEachern omits the necessary recitative. On the reverse side of the Kipnis disc is another well-known bass air, *Il lacerato spirito*, taken from Verdi's very next opera, *Simon Boccanegra* (1857), which obtained at Venice and elsewhere no more than a *succès d'estime*. In addition to the German basso, who makes an admirable record of it, creditable in every way to Polydor workmanship, I may mention with no less unqualified praise the efforts of José Mardones (Col. A.5201), noble alike as to amplitude of voice and phrase; Virgilio Lazzari (Voc. A.0222), rather dejected in tone, but broad and massive; Ezio Pinza (H.M.V., D.B.699), who uses a well-covered dark organ with poise, deliberation, and power; and, finally, Nazzarene de Angelis (Fono. B. 92440), who, on two sides of a 10in. disc, sings the whole piece with excellent feeling and dramatic colour.

LATER VERDI.

During the sixteen years that elapsed between the production of the *Vêpres Siciliennes* and the revelation of *Aida* (Cairo, 1871) three operas besides *Simon Boccanegra* issued from this prolific pen. Each was notable, but only one, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, continues in the active repertory to-day. This period of Verdi's career was transitional—one that had left behind the second, in some degree at any rate, but had not yet attained the third, that amazing epoch of maturing styles which opening up with *Aida*, advanced with *Otello*, and culminated in *Falstaff*. By far the best of these transitional operas was undoubtedly *Un Ballo*; and its survival is doubly interesting, because of the fact that its book is not a whit less open to criticism than those of its contemporary works, *La Forza del Destino* (1862) and *Don Carlos* (1867). In both these cases it may be truly said that the exaggerated melodrama and violent situations which gave them birth also contributed largely to their speedy degeneration. Mr. J. H. Mapleson proudly declared in his memoirs that the first production in England of *La Forza del Destino* (originally written for St. Petersburg), was the principal feature of the season at Her Majesty's in 1867. I do not observe that he had much to say about it beyond that; though I remember being present (and very little amused) at one brief revival of it at the same house a few years later, when a well-known prima donna, Caroline Salla by name, and, I think, the tenor Fancelli, appeared in the chief rôles.

Now, despite its liberal sprinkling of attractive numbers of up-to-date Verdian flavour, the Paris Opéra refused to have anything to do with *La Forza del Destino*. On the other hand, the director resolved in 1865 to arrange with the composer to write another opera expressly for that house. Hence *Don Carlos*, given for the first time at Paris in March 1867, the year of the great Universal Exhibition, and mounted at Covent Garden in the following June. It was well received, but its success was shortlived. Once more the composer had no luck with his French librettists; it was the experience of the *Vêpres Siciliennes* over again. The fact was that he was never happy when writing to a French text, and, though he had made a decided advance in his art in twelve years, the general musical plan of *Don Carlos* lacked cohesion and consistency of style. Still, the score contained many beauties which could please separately, whilst the opera as a whole made a favourable impression nowhere save in the composer's native land. So much for the two failures that just preceded the brilliant triumph of *Aida*.

That *La Forza del Destino* has recently been revived on the stage in America, I am quite aware, and I attribute this more to its gramophone

* Arthur Pougin's *Life of Verdi*.

reputation than anything else. It is a magnificently recorded opera. In this fashion the most gifted and best-paid singers of the day have done it ample justice with far greater profit to themselves than they could have ever gained by performing it in the theatre; nor has it been their fault if many gramophonists have not yet realised to the full what a treasure of superb tone and declamatory art lies concealed in these unexplored regions. So far as I have played them for myself on my excellent Grafonola and Sonora Model, they have afforded me a great deal of pleasure; and I would even, had time permitted, have tried some of them again (at the office of this magazine) on the new H.M.V. machine, whereof I have only made a passing acquaintance at the Oxford Street establishment. Generally speaking, they seem to be fairly recent examples of the recording art and mostly first-rate at that. I note these things because I am now dealing with operas that have not been heard here by Londoners of the past two or three generations.

Those who love Verdi's earlier and more familiar operas will need no assurance that *La Forza del Destino* contains many melodious and intensely dramatic moments. After *Rigoletto* and *Un Ballo* he simply could not write a score which did not include a large proportion of such passages. You have only to listen to the Caruso records of this opera to feel that the singer simply adored it. He did not spare himself; he lavished his golden notes—"golden" in every sense—upon each phrase that afforded scope for his inexhaustible resources, and with a degree of generosity unequalled in any other opera. More especially is this apparent in the duets—the *Invano, Alvaro* (H.M.V., D.M.106) with Pasquale Amato comprising also *Le minaccie, i fieri accenti*, both wonderfully dramatic and exciting; and, again, in the *Sleale! il segreto fie dunque violata* (H.M.V., D.M.107), with De Luca, immense in volume and power, in stormy abusive declamation and the shower of high C's towards the end. Again, in another duet (H.M.V., D.M.105) the better-known *Solenne in quest'ora*, the famous tenor is associated with his old colleague, Antonio Scotti, and, though the latter has less to do, their voices go splendidly together. This piece begins with a long solo passage for the higher voice ("big guitar" accompaniment), the repeated "Addio" at the close being curiously reminiscent of that in the first act of the *Traviata*.

I have several additional examples of it, varied in their quality as records, but ably interpreted. The best all round are the two German ones, by Robert Hutt and Heinrich Schlusnus (Poly. 72735) and by Schubert and Scheidl (Poly. 65592); particularly the first-named. That by Constantino and Blanchart (Col. A.5184) is toneless and veiled; that by Garbin-Corradetti (Fonot. B.92254) very nice and agreeable, no more; and that by Lenghi-

Cellini and Geo. Baker (Voc. 04105) likewise of average merit. None of these will be preferred to the Caruso-Scotti.

The most important tenor solo in *La Forza del Destino* is the *O tu che in seno agl'angeli*—made up of characteristic Verdian themes and effective points, but with no real climax to carry it off. Caruso put all that was possible into it (H.M.V., D.B.112), scoring wherever there was a chance; but I must confess that Tudor Davies's effort (H.M.V., D.707) gains nothing from the English version, *O thou that now with angels*, to which it is rather mildly rendered. Another English example is furnished by Florence Austral in the prayer, *Virgin Mother, hear me* (H.M.V., D.798), a broad melody of the well-known type, to which her opulent tones lend the fullest value, after deducting something for the absence of a choral background, such as Verdi loved to lend his leading soprano in her pious moments. We get the effect of this support and of the restless violin accompaniment in the Italian interpretation of Celestina Boninsegna, *Madre, pietosa Vergine* (Col. D.8081), although the thin solo voice, compared with that of Florence Austral, actually constitutes a loss on balance. However, on the other side of her 10in. disc Celestina readjusts matters with an artistic and pleasing performance of *La Vergine degl'angeli*, which air, with choral and harp accompaniment, is also recorded by Rosa Ponselle (Col. 7340) and Emmy Destinn (Col. A.5398). This last may be the oldest record of the three, but for beauty of tone it is infinitely the best; it reproduces a voice that one recalls with enduring admiration. Destinn was a great singer.

Two baritone airs, *Urna fatale del mio destino* (H.M.V., D.B.738) and *Egli e' salvo* (H.M.V. 189), are both sung by Mattia Battistini in his usual masterful way. Those who enjoy vengeful or jubilant outbursts will choose the first; those who prefer a graceful and tender *cantilena* will want the latter; each is good of its kind. Finally, in this opera, there is to speak of the soprano air known as *Pace, pace, mio Dio!*—the title whereof ought, I think, to be *A te, mia figlia*, seeing that the whole piece is practically built up on these words. The theme consists of three snatches from *Il Trovatore*, commencing with the chromatic descent that forms the *coda* of *Il baten* (happily the grand old Italian was only utilising his own property over again). This charmingly devised mosaic is not well suited to Luisa Tetrazzini (H.M.V., D.B.538); it demands a richer, darker medium than hers. Not at all satisfactory, either, are the efforts of Ester Mazzoleni (Fonot. B.69189) or Georgina Caprile (Fonot. E. 74151), which are too tremulous; nor can I speak highly of Zita Fumagalli-Riva's (Parlo. E.10296), which is spoilt by excessive slurring and complete absence of

articulate utterance. On the other hand, there is much to be said in favour of two others, viz., the sweet individual timbre and smooth phrasing of Celestina Boninsegna (Col. A.5199), and the more powerful, delicately-nuanced rendering of Rosa Ponselle (Victor-H.M.V., C.440). These are among the desirable items that, thanks to the gramophone, will help to keep alive *La Forza del Destino*.

Don Carlos is less rich in separable excerpts. But one or two are worthy of Verdi at his best, and particularly so the fine baritone air, *Ella giammai m' amò*, which, to my thinking, is nearly, if not quite, equal to *Eri tu*. There need be no fear that it will share oblivion with the opera, though one wonders why it has not been more recorded than it is. Columbia has never done it at all; and H.M.V. provides only one example, with the inadequate French title *Elle ne m'aime pas* (D.K.127) occupying the reverse side to a duet from the same score, *Dio che nell'alma infondere*. Marcel Journet is not so impressive as usual in this air; he does not recall in it the superb art of his countryman, Faure. I should almost prefer Alfred Jerger (Poly. 65648) for his sympathy and refinement, if he were not a shade too lachrymose. I like *les larmes dans la voix*, but not when they are overdone. Murray Davey (Voc. A.0245) is at any rate resonant, clear, and enunciates well. Alexander Kipnis (Poly. 65723) displays manly vigour in a pure baritone voice and shines to advantage in the higher range; his scale is even, and the orchestra, with its viola obbligato, accompanies smoothly. But then he sings in German and the needful bass quality is missing. So I am still waiting for the ideal record of this beautiful solo.

The duet already referred to, *Dio che nell'alma*, is sung by Martinelli and de Luca, but not with so much heroic *élan* and martial energy as by Caruso and Scotti (H.M.V., D.M.111). After the introductory tenor solo, it runs into fluent "thirds" and becomes a kind of Italian "Lord is a man of war"—à la Verdi, of course; and thereafter in the matter of blending and precision there is little to choose between the two records. Concerning Dame Clara Butt's familiar delivery of the well-known air, *O don fatale* (Col. 7316), it would be superfluous to offer comment; she has sung it, I fancy, ever since her Royal College days, but, truth to tell, it lies very high for a pure contralto. The baritone solo, *Per me giunto è il dì*, is cast somewhat in the same hackneyed mould and tells us nothing in a musical sense, that the master had not told us a hundred times before (happily he told us much more original things later on). Yet, for a typical Battistini effort (H.M.V., D.B.148), one could hardly choose a finer record of its class—superb tone, sustained throughout with the utmost artistry. De Luca (H.M.V., D.B.218) also has a warm, rich baritone (with an occasional

suspicion of tenor quality) and displays it to advantage when it is quite steady in the same piece.

He manages his low notes—as does Battistini—with greater adroitness than Titto Ruffo (D.B.178); but otherwise the latter pours out a lovely tone with any amount of pathos and sobs galore. De Luca I like much better in the air *O Carlo ascolta* (H.M.V., D.A.190), which he sings in excellent *cantabile* style. Nor must I omit a final word of appreciation for the tenor air *Io l'ho perduta*, as given with abundance of robust tone by Bernardo de Muro (H.M.V., D.B.554); and with which I end my retrospect of the recorded quasi-failures of Giuseppe Verdi. You will agree that they are too good to deserve oblivion.

P.S.—It was interesting recently to compare Elisabeth Schumann as an interpreter of Lieder with the operatic and gramophone singer whom one had already studied. In my estimation she came out as well at Wigmore Hall as at Covent Garden, where her Oktavian was excellent; and at the same time she exhibited a warmth of style that is frequently missing from her records. These I find, as a rule, coldly correct, but devoid of characterisation. She brings to the concert platform an atmosphere that suggests the influence of the stage and the feeling for the dramatic situation in an air like Mozart's "Deh vieni." Her finished technique and sense of tone-colour enable her to invest her Schubert and Strauss songs with the right qualities of facile ease, contrast, and authority. In short, she is a singer to be listened to with interest and pleasure.

Elena Gerhardt should now confine herself at recitals exclusively to her native Lieder. She is, I fear, developing an occasional tremolo; and it shows most when she attempts as she did at Queen's Hall on Feb. 2nd, less familiar songs by Marcello, Gluck, and Purcell. These things are not quite in her *genre*, and they are unwelcome when sung in the garbled German versions which mutilate and defy every genuine tradition.

HERMAN KLEIN.



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NOTES on SOME RECORDS of MUSIC by W. A. MOZART

(Continued from page 410)

Compiled by FRANCIS E. TERRY

*K.575. *String Quartet (No. 21) in D.*—Written for the King of Prussia, June, 1789. As we have compared the Quartet in C to a Raffael, so we may compare this quartet to a Poussin in respect of its erudition and severe but gracious symmetry of composition; it was written to suit the king's tastes; it contains unusual contrapuntal elaboration and gives unusual importance to the higher registers of the 'cello. It has been played by the L.S.Q. and recorded by Vocalion on two records (D.02013-4), each movement occupying one side. In the first movement the recapitulation has been omitted except for the return to the first subject at the end (bars 117 to 179). In the second movement (andante) eight bars at the beginning of the coda are omitted (bars 58 to 64); the interest is very evenly divided between the instruments and the feeling, though in a sense lyrical and even passionate, is yet unusually reserved. In the third movement (minuet) the only repeats observed are the first section of the trio and the usual da capo. The fourth movement is a closely knit rondo and seems to carry the special qualities of this quartet to a yet higher pitch; there is a cut towards the end (bars 128 to 219). The cuts are fairly harmless, the playing masterly, the recording fairly good, and the many contrapuntal passages can be followed with comparative ease. The uniformity of mood which prevails in this quartet is reinforced by the similarity of the principal themes of the first, second, and fourth movements. The second and third movements (both uncut) have also been played by the Flonzaley Quartet and by the Busch Quartet; the Flonzaley renderings are recorded by H.M.V. on single sides of two separate records (D.B.249 and D.B.254 respectively), the Busch renderings are recorded by Polydor on the two sides of a single record (*72795); the Flonzaley renderings are very clear and vigorous, but perhaps a little harsh both in playing and recording, and are expensive; the Busch record is of about the same quality as the L.S.Q. records and will perhaps be preferred by some people.

†K.581. *Quintette for Clarinet and Strings, in A.*—Composed September, 1789. This quintette was composed for the clarinetist Stdler, and there is therefore a tendency to make the clarinet too predominant; in the apparent simplicity of the melodic material it is typical of Mozart's later style. The

Larghetto and Minuet have been recorded on two double-sided records (two sides to each movement) and issued by Parlophone in Germany (P.1670 and 1); I do not know if they are obtainable in England, and will therefore treat them shortly. The playing is good; the recording is quite good, but not as clear as one would like. The Larghetto is well known. The Minuet is particularly beautiful and very typical of this quintette. I do not think there are any cuts. It is to be hoped that Parlophone may some day publish these records in this country, and that the other movements (the first is specially beautiful) may also be made accessible to gramophonists.

*K.588. *Così fan Tutte Overture.*—Composed in the latter part of 1789. This opera was written by command of the Emperor to words by Da Ponte, the librettist of *Il Nozze de Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*; the libretto of this opera has not the strength and dramatic force of the two companion pieces, but is a very light farcical comedy, and the musical numbers (set in *recitativo secco*) are numerous, but for the most part short; the opera is held by the majority of critics (*dissentiente* E. J. Dent) to be a comparative failure. The overture is in a modified sonata form preceded by 14 introductory bars of andante; the modifications of sonata form consist of a shortening of the exposition (the second subject being merely rudimentary) and an even greater shortening of the recapitulation; the development is twice as long as the exposition; the thematic material is slight and non-melodic; rapid passages preponderate; and there is a general effect of lightness which accords well with the character of the opera; the introductory andante is founded on the setting of the words "*così fan tutte*" ("that is how all women behave") sung in the opera by the cynical old gentleman who is the amused spectator of the intrigue; the same phrase occurs at the beginning of the coda. This overture is well conducted by Dr. Weissmann and well recorded by Parlophone (E.10232) except that it is sometimes a little difficult to follow the separate parts; on the back is the *Impresario Overture (supra)*.

K.618. *Ave Verum Corpus for Choir in Four Voices, and Organ.*—Composed June 18th, 1791, at Baden (near Vienna) on a short holiday taken on account of his extreme ill health. This has been sung by the Westminster Cathedral Choir and

recorded by H.M.V. on a single side (D.337). The words are :

Ave verum corpus, natum de Mariâ virgine,
Hail, true body, born of Mary the Virgin,

Vere passum, immolatum in
Truly having suffered, having been sacrificed on
cruce pro homine,
the cross for man,

Cujus latus, perforatum, undâ fluxit
Whose side, pierced, with water flowed
et sanguine :
and with blood :

Esto nobis praegustator in mortis examine.
Be our foretaster in death's trial.

I have tried to show the meaning of each word of the Latin, because the effect of the music depends very much on the simplicity and sincerity with which the value of the individual words is interpreted ; the music is deeply emotional without being in the least dramatic or rhetorical ; the musical and personal experience of a lifetime seems to be crystallised in this perfect piece of writing. The recording is old and faulty, the principal blemish being a tendency of the men's voices to swamp those of the boys (but this can largely be remedied by the use of an appropriate sound-box and needles) ; on the back is an attractive O Salutaris Hostia by Elgar. Despite all faults of recording this record is one of the half-dozen or so which are absolutely necessary to any gramophonist who wishes to obtain a true notion of Mozart.

*K.620. *Magic Flute*. (i) *Overture*.—This opera was being composed during June, July, August, and September, 1791. Originally planned as a romantic and magical concoction with farcical elements for vulgar and popular performance, it developed into a profoundly meditated and mystical statement of Mozart's ultimate beliefs, though some of the original elements were incongruously retained. The Overture, which (together with the March of the Priests) was the last part to be written, is a fitting prologue to such an opera. The slow passage at the beginning and the three solemn chords which usher in the development are obvious and well known ; attention may also be called to the passages in the development where the music seems almost to typify the struggles of the human spirit. The version in the Vocalion catalogue (D.02117), conducted by Percy Fletcher, is probably the best record ; it is amazingly clear, the details stand out well, and the counterpoint can be followed with the greatest ease ; but the instruments, though each is clearly presented, are not as well differentiated from each other in tone as they might be ; the conducting is a good and lucid reading of the score, but lacking in sensibility. A version in the Polydor catalogue (*65666), conducted by Seidler-Winkler, is a better interpretation, combining strength and sensibility very successfully ;

the recording has its good points, but seems to me to be quite definitely inferior to that of the Vocalion record. The version in the Parlophone catalogue (E.10012) conducted by Moerike is a meritorious but rather stolid interpretation, the adagio passages being too slow ; its tonal qualities are better than those of either the Vocalion or the Polydor (Seidler-Winkler) record, but it is not so clear as the Vocalion record. The version in the Columbia catalogue (L.1001), conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, displays in some passages greater sensibility than any of the three preceding versions, but there is a lack of grip, and I cannot consider it a really successful interpretation ; the recording lacks clarity. I think that the majority of gramophonists would place these four records in the same order as I have done, but I can well imagine each of them being thought the best by different individuals. I have also heard the record in the H.M.V. catalogue (C.648) and another one in the Polydor catalogue (62466), conducted by Leo Blech, and consider both of them definitely inferior to any of the four above mentioned. In every case the break comes between the exposition and the development.

K.620. *Magic Flute*. (ii) *March of the Priests*.—Written September 28th, 1791. This is the march from the beginning of Act 2 and is informed with the deepest feeling, of a mystical and religious character, combining austerity and consolation, the solitude of meditation and the communion of religious fraternity ; I well remember how deeply it affected me when, at the age of, I suppose, about eleven, I heard this opera for the first time, and I still hear it with renewed wonder and delight. It has been conducted by Fritz Busch and recorded by Polydor on a single side (*65868) ; this record is good without being at all wonderful technically ; but the beauty of the music makes it a desirable possession ; on the back is the Minuet from the Symphony in E flat (*supra*). There is another record of this march by the same conductor and orchestra in the Polydor catalogue (*65866), which I have not heard.

†K.621. *Overture to The Clemency of Titus*.—Composed August, 1791, for the Coronation of the Emperor Leopold II. as King of Bohemia at Prague, on September 6th, 1791. The libretto was adapted from an old libretto by Metastasio and depicted the Imperial magnanimity of Leopold's predecessor Titus ; this is Mozart's last attempt at tragic opera, was hastily put together, and is largely a reversion to an older style and very much of a coronation piece. This, however, is no excuse for attempting to play the Overture on a brass band, as has been done by Pontypool Silver Band, whose effort has been recorded by Winner on two sides of a ten-inch record (3982). I understand that as a record of a band this is quite good, but as a representation of Mozart it is execrable. It is uncut.

K.622. *Concerto for Clarinet in A*.—Completed September, 1791, a few days after the first performance of *The Magic Flute* and given, together with a sum of money, to the clarinettist Stadler to furnish him forth for an expedition to Prague; Mozart himself was not only ill, but also in debt at the time, and there is little doubt that Stadler, who had been helped and assisted by Mozart for some time, had been not only borrowing, but also stealing from him. The adagio movement has been played by Philipp Dreisbach and recorded by Polydor on a single side of a twelve-inch record of their cheapest grade (*15958). I have not played this with the score, but imagine it to be substantially cut. The music is an attractive and melodious but not very profound example of Mozart's latest manner. The solo instrument is excellently played and recorded. The orchestra is too unobtrusive, but otherwise good. To the man who wishes to use the gramophone as a means of gaining acquaintance with Mozart this record will not be of great importance; but for the man who wishes to have a varied and interesting collection of records this excellent and unusual "snippet" should prove most attractive.

Unidentified Pot-boilers.—Mozart produced (especially in his last years) an enormous number of dances of a not very elevated character for small orchestras, some of them Minuets, some Waltzes, some German Dances, and some Country Dances; of this sort of composition the composer's diary shows that he wrote 28 in 1788, 30 in 1789, none in 1790, and 35 in 1791; he wrote them hurriedly and more or less to pattern. They are not, I believe, now played in the sets in which the composer wrote them, but in various sets put together by editors and conductors from the most popular of them. Polydor have recorded numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 of one such set of "Eight German Dances" on one twelve-inch and one ten-inch record (*65510 and 62303), the first four on the twelve-inch record and the last three on the ten-inch one. Parlophone have recorded on a single record (E.10123) a set of "Three Old Dances," numbers 2 and 3 of which are identical with numbers 7 and 8 of the Polydor set. The Parlophone versions of the identical pieces seem better than the Polydor versions of them, but the Polydor twelve-inch record seems better than their ten-inch one and on a level with the Parlophone record; I should therefore advise those who like this type of music to get the two twelve-inch records (Polydor and Parlophone), and leave the ten-inch record alone. A "Minuet in D," which seems to belong to the same class of composition and is a pleasant and mildly interesting specimen of the type, has been recorded quite nicely by Columbia (L.1132), backed by a composition by Grieg which is called a "Symphonic Dance," but is not much of a dance and not in the least symphonic. I am writing this paragraph at the end of five months

during which my leisure has been almost entirely devoted to Mozart, and am therefore perhaps too depreciatory of these pot-boilers, as is natural after the contemplation of masterpieces:—

The stars around the lovely moon
Then hide their sparkling light
When at her full she shines upon
The stillness of the night.

But I remember having been much pleased with these records when I first heard them: they are indeed easy, requiring no effort of the hearer, and are in large part mechanical; but with this they have a certain vigour, so much of ideas as may distract a tired melancholy or immature mind, and some sufficiently pleasing instrumental effects: therefore I recommend them, but with this proviso, that no gramophonist shall break into applause murmurs of "how typically Mozartian" and the like, or presume to imagine that because Mozart could write genteel nonsense for money he was therefore a pretty fellow passing a vacuous existence in some cloud-cuckoo-town where Queen Anne never dies.

SPURIOUS WORKS.

There is a general consensus of opinion that Mozart had nothing to do with a mildly pleasant operatico-religious production called "The Twelfth Mass," which appears under his name in some catalogues.

ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA.

(Please insert references in the margin of the earlier instalments.)

PAGE 309, COLUMN 2, LINE 9 (K.218).

For "No. 5" read "No. 4."

PAGE 309, COLUMN 2, LINES 23-25 (K.218).

I made a stupid mistake in saying that development and recapitulation are rolled into one; there is a very definite opening of the recapitulation a little less than half way through the side.

PAGE 310, COLUMN 1, LINES 2 to 6 (K.218).

My collaborator has made me see that I have not been fair to these records; she points out that the playing of the violin is exceptionally masterly, and that the writing is attractive throughout and really beautiful in the second movement; I have been brought to complete agreement with these views; I still do not think the writing quite as good as that of the preceding concerto, but the playing is decidedly better. This Concerto has also been played by Riele Queling and recorded by Parlophone on six sides (E.10383-5), each movement complete on two sides; the break in the first movement occurs at an early stage in the development; the break in the second movement occurs at the end of the first subject of the recapitulation; the break in the third movement occurs at the beginning of the section of andante gracioso in common time; the cadenzas played are Joachim's and are in some ways perhaps more intrinsically interesting than those

played by Kreisler, but out of keeping with the spirit of the work and unMozartian; the playing is in a few passages brilliant and effective, but the tempo varies abruptly and is often hurried, and the general effect of the interpretation is definitely unsatisfactory; the recording is good, and in some places there are beautiful effects of contrast between soloist and orchestra which are missed in the H.M.V. version; my first impression of the Parlophone version was distinctly more favourable, but I should fairly speedily have realised its inferiority even if my collaborator had not been very emphatic on the subject; it is, however, a sufficiently brilliant gramophonic performance.

PAGE 310, COLUMN 1, LINE 10 (K.219).

For "No. 6" read "No. 5."

PAGE 310, COLUMN 2, LINE 22 (K.251) ADD:—

According to my recollection of this record, which I have now returned to Messrs. Imhof, I think it is probably a cut version of the Andante di molto of Symphony No. 34 (*infra*): the first few bars sound identical.

PAGE 311, COLUMN 1, LINE 28: BETWEEN K334 AND K370 ADD:—

K.384. *Symphony No. 34 in C*. The slow movement (andante di molto) has been recorded complete on two sides by Polydor (*69700): it is in quasi-sonata form (without development), the break coming between the exposition and development. It is scored for strings only, with bassoons doubling the violoncellos. It is easy and graceful, empty on the whole, with touches, however, of feeling and even of drama, a pleasant snippet and a good example of what was probably the general level of fairly good symphonies before Mozart, in his maturity, had given new meaning to the form. It is well played and recorded.

PAGE 313, COLUMN 1, LINES 24-28 (K.421).

The interpretation of the Kutcher Quartet now seems to me distinctly better than is stated in these lines, especially in respect of melodic feeling. I have modified my opinion in view of further playing of the records, talking with my collaborator, hearing this quartet played by the Léner Quartet and by the Pro Arte Quartet, and hearing the Kutcher Quartet play a Haydn quartet. These records now seem distinctly more musicianly than most, though the achievement is not so good as the intention.

PAGE 313, COLUMN 2, AFTER LINE 49 (BETWEEN K.428 AND K.458) ADD:—

K.454. *Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin (No. 15) in B flat*.—Composed April, 1784. The last movement (rondo) of this sonata has been played by Sir Walford Davies and Marjorie Hayward and recorded complete by H.M.V. on two sides of a twelve-inch plum label record (C.1071) in the Educational Catalogue.

It is a splendid rondo and magnificently played and recorded, with great spirit and perfect balance. It is one of the best Mozart "snippets" obtainable.

PAGE 313, COLUMN 2, LINE 50 (K.458).

Add an asterisk.

PAGE 314, COLUMN 1, LINE 47 (K.465).

Add an asterisk.

PAGE 406, COLUMN 1, LINE 42 (K.522).

For "1788" read "1787."

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

The gramophonist who already loves Mozart will be able to decide for himself which records to get first. He who is beginning his acquaintance with Mozart would do well to start with the Trio in G (K.564) and Rondo in B flat (K.454); he may also, for a time, like the German dances; he will then go on to the Concerto in G (K.216) and some of the overtures; he will about this time want to get the Trios in E flat (K.498) and in E (K.542); the first quartette which he will probably appreciate (though not intrinsically the most interesting) will be that in B flat (K.458); his first Symphony will probably be that in G minor (K.550); he will then get the Quintette in G minor (K.516) and as many other works as he can, and will probably end by filing his petition. Lest they should be overlooked, I would once more refer to the single records which seem noteworthy (not always on account of good recording) and are noted under K.331 (D'Albert), K.387 (Flonzaley), K.618, K.620 (Priests' March) and K.622.

F. E. T.

* * *

Note.—The two previous articles on the records of Mozart, by Francis E. Terry, appeared in the December, 1925, and February, 1926, numbers, of which a few copies are still available (price 3s., postage 4d.). Copies of the coloured portrait of Mozart, which formed the December Art Supplement, can also be obtained for 6d. each, post free.

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ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON

XI.—Gramophone Horns (*continued*)

TO make a horn to the shape described in the last article it is necessary, first of all, to make a mould or template. The following method is suggested as being comparatively simple and accurate. Transfer the plan of the horn to a piece of three-ply board and cut out the board to that shape. Cut out a second piece of three-ply board to the same shape. Up the centre line of one board cut out a slot, as wide as the board is thick and extending from one end half way along the length of the board. Up the centre of the other board cut a similar slot *but starting from the other end*. With the faces of the boards at right angles to each other, slide one slot over the other so, that the boards fit together at right angles in the form of a cross.

The boards then form two perpendicular diameters of the mould. Place this with the large end on a piece of board or glass, rather more than 2 feet square, and fill in the spaces between the boards with clay or some other plastic material, moulding it and smoothing it so that each horizontal section of the mould is circular. When quite dry, face the mould with tin-foil, stuck on with water only, so that the horn will not adhere to the mould.

For the material of the horn itself, the amateur is limited to such things as paper or to some plastic material. A material known as "plastic wood" has recently been placed on the market by the Celestor Manufacturing Company, of 55, Dartmouth Road, Forest Hill, S.E. 23, and this should serve the purpose very well indeed. Strawboard is hardly suitable since it cannot easily be bent so as to follow the double curvature of the mould. Strips of tough brown paper, stuck on with strong flour paste to which some size has been added, serves quite well. The thickness of the horn should be about $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch at the narrow end, but may be thinned down to $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch at the open end. When the pasting or moulding is finished, the horn should be left on the mould for a fortnight or so to dry, and then varnished or lacquered with three or four coats, both inside and out.

To return now to the question of design. The table given in the last article stopped at a length of 48 inches where the length of the perpendicular was 12 inches. The next few lengths beyond that point are:—

Distance from end	51"	54"	57"	60"
Length of perp.	15"	19"	24"	30"

So that if the curve were continued to 51 inches the

diameter of the open end would be 30 inches, whilst if the horn were continued to 5 feet, the width of the open end would be 5 feet also. As things are at present such a horn would be unwieldy, to say the least. If a longer horn is desired with a reasonable size of open end, all that is necessary is to alter the scale along the centre line. Thus, instead of stepping off distances of 3 inches as previously described, distances of 4 inches or 5 inches or 6 inches, etc., could be stepped off, the lengths of the perpendiculars at successive points remaining the same as before. If we took distances of 4 inches along the central line, the perpendiculars would be $\frac{1\frac{3}{4}}{4}$ of an inch at the end, $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch at 4 inches from the end, $\frac{1\frac{5}{8}}{8}$ of an inch at 8 inches from the end, and so on. This would give a horn 64 inches long with an open end of 2 feet, or a horn 6 feet long with an open end of 3 feet 2 inches. It would also have the effect of decreasing the taper all along the length. Similarly, we might shorten the horn whilst still preserving a large open end by stepping off distances of, say, 2 inches along the central line. This would increase the taper and give a 2 feet open end for a length of only 32 inches. But if such a small length of horn is required it would probably be better to retain the smaller angle of taper and be content with a smaller open end.

It will be seen from the above that, using a logarithmic form of curve and keeping a constant diameter at the sound-box end, we can still alter two factors to suit requirements, viz., the length of the horn and the diameter of the open end. For any length of horn a logarithmic curve can be drawn to give any width of open end and vice versa. There is enough scope for variation here to provide us with gramophone "revolutions" for the rest of our lives! As I have remarked before, there is probably some functional relationship between the length of the horn and the width of the open end which will give the most satisfactory results. We await some bright genius who will show us what that is. In the meantime we can only go on trying and trying and trying.

* * *

Note: Next month I hope to conclude my notes upon flexibility and record wear. But I should like to warn readers in advance against playing Parlophone records with fibre needles. The fibre friction soon rips up the surface. Parlophones are the only records I know where this is the case.

P. WILSON.

CREDE EXPERTO

A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

VII.—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OR MACHINES.

SINCE we started this series of articles last October, a number of gramophones and sound-boxes have been submitted to us for test and confidential report which have indicated not only an ignorance on the part of the makers, and therefore presumably of the public, of the capabilities of a good gramophone, but also a lack of appreciation of some fundamental principles in regard to the qualities which a gramophone should possess. In our first article we wrote with some fervour against the notion that a gramophone should primarily be regarded as a piece of furniture. There is another notion which has gained some influential support, often, be it said in a whisper, among professional musicians, which seems to us equally fallacious and if anything even more dangerous. It is that a gramophone should be regarded as a musical instrument.

It is now no uncommon occurrence for us to be confronted with the claim that such and such a gramophone is "more than a mere machine—it is a musical instrument." In our view this is a false ideal. In so far as a gramophone ceases to be a mere machine, so far does it depart from its proper functions. A musical instrument has a characteristic tone of its own. A gramophone should have no such thing; it should be a piece of mechanism by which the tones which were *produced* to make a record are *re-produced* when that record is "played" by its means. Put in this form the statement may seem to border on the obvious. If so, we can only surmise either that it is so obvious that it is usually overlooked or that normal hearing, like normal eyesight, is an uncommon quality so that gramophone makers imagine that the public want a false tone and set out to cater for it.

We have noticed that the gramophones for which this sort of claim is made are usually those of the "sweet," or "mellow" toned type. The claim is coupled, as a rule, with the statement that the remarkable feature about the gramophone is the absence of scratch and other alien noises. Usually too, the sound-box has a non-mica diaphragm of over 50 m.m. diameter, and a back plate which is made of vulcanite or other absorbent material. We confess frankly that we have come to regard this type of gramophone and sound-box, for the main fault is usually in the sound-box, with a certain amount of impatience. In the endeavour to abolish alien noises they usually succeed in banishing the

living tonal qualities as well; so that one is compelled to listen to musical sounds which may be pleasant enough in themselves but do not happen to correspond to those which one is supposed to be hearing.

We have two tests which have always succeeded in demonstrating the inadequacy of machines of this type. The first is to play the records of the instruments of the orchestra. One of our members places the sound-box on the record at random without announcing what instrument is supposed to be playing, and it is then the business of the rest to name the instrument. On very few of these gramophones is the proper character of the instruments reproduced with any fidelity. The stringed and reed instruments have an unnatural sweetness; the viola turns into a 'cello and the clarinet into a flute; the side-drums sound like a circular saw, the glockenspiel like a children's toy, and the tambourines like the scratch on the inner ring of the record. The tubular bells and the flute alone bear any close resemblance to the original as a rule, and even with the flute some of the rich notes are rather distorted. When we come to the full orchestral record the result is totally inadequate. Not only is each instrument imperfect in quality but a number of them seem to be rolled into one. Our second test is to substitute for the sound-box supplied with the machine an H.M.V. No. 2 or an Exhibition or other box of that type, such as the Saturn or the Expression, or in some cases the Verloc. We have never yet failed to obtain a marked improvement in the reproduction by this means, both of vocal and instrumental records. On one occasion last October, unknown to the rest one member of the Committee added a Lifebelt as well. The effect was startling. Every other member of the Committee immediately noticed an immense improvement, and inquired what in the world he had done.

What then is the attraction of these "mellow-toned" gramophones? The answer appears to be that with them the gramophonist need have no fear of being disturbed by unpleasant noises. The opiate is a tempting relief in time of trouble, and the post-war market was so flooded with cheap machines with unsteady motors, badly-adjusted sound-boxes, and cracked diaphragms, that any relief is attractive. The diaphragm controversy, like the needle controversy, has been going on for many years, and will probably go on for many more. One person or another seems to have tried

diaphragms made of every possible material under the sun, as well as some which were seemingly not possible. Only a short time ago we had submitted to us a diaphragm which had been made out of feathers. As time goes on, however, we become more and more convinced that mica surpasses all other materials. It seems to be the least subject to fatigue and to have the quickest "recovery"—by which we mean that its own natural vibrations are most quickly damped out and therefore interfere the least with the forced vibrations imposed upon it by the stylus. Mica has often been blamed for the so-called "metallic" quality of some gramophones and sound-boxes. But we find, on the contrary, that the mica diaphragm is the least open to the charge of adding any quality of its own to the forced vibrations which it converts into sound.

The main defects of the mica diaphragm are its variability and its fragility. It is very difficult to find two micas which have the same quality. You may get two of the same size, thickness, weight and ring, and yet they will give quite different results when mounted in the same sound-box. The laminations, which are the source of the mica's general efficiency as a sound-box diaphragm, are at the same time the source of its variability. And since the quality of the mica varies the only satisfactory way of obtaining uniformly good results appears to be to vary the quality of the stylus and the springing to correspond. The best sound-boxes we know achieve their success either by accident or by careful attention to the adjustment of the stylus and the springing to the particular piece of mica. The fragility, likewise, is the defect of the mica's virtues. A mica sound-box requires much more delicate treatment than it usually gets. The slightest jar on the stylus will crack the centre of the diaphragm, and have lamentable results on the reproduction. Moreover, apart altogether from the re-adjustment which may be necessary, the insertion of a new mica is not a simple operation. Any but the most expert operator will crack the new diaphragm as often as not. But a blob of wax covers a multitude of cracks and the public are often fobbed off with a faulty diaphragm suitably disguised. We advise any reader who finds his gramophone blast or give an edge or throatiness to vocal records to examine the sound-box carefully, both back and front, under a good light to see if the diaphragm is intact. We suspect that there will be many who will find that they have been unwitting victims of a faulty diaphragm.

VIII.—THE LINGUAPHONE REPEATER.

This repeater is less ambitious than others which we have seen. It does not purport to be automatic in action or to act as a self-stopping device or to repeat a dance record and is therefore free from

many objections which can be made to such devices. Its object is simply to provide a means whereby the gramophone operator can locate a particular passage in a record and repeat that passage directly and as often as he wishes. The need for this is most often met with when the gramophone is used for educational purposes. The ordinary gramophonist who plays his records for amusement or recreation normally finds little need for anything of the sort.

The principle upon which the instrument works is that of the railway carriage coupling. A clamp which fixes to the tone-arm is connected by means of a pin to a carriage (A) which moves along a slide. The slide is firmly attached to a pillar which fits in a socket screwed to the motor board. As the tone-arm moves across the record it draws the carriage (A) along the slide (and rotates the slide and pillar in the socket). The slide has a second carriage (B), which, by the operation of a lever, can either be coupled to (A) or disconnected and fixed to the slide. Initially (A) and (B) are coupled together. When the operator comes to a passage which he wishes to repeat he presses the lever thus uncoupling (B) and clamping it to the slide. To repeat the passage he lifts the sound-box from the record and moves the tone-arm back until (A) comes into contact with (B) again. This gives the point from which to re-play. The repetition includes a few bars before the one at which the carriage (B) was fixed, so that the operator has a margin of from two to three seconds in which to press the lever after hearing the beginning of the selected passage.

The Linguaphone Repeater is a most beautifully finished instrument and, *if set properly*, works very smoothly. The friction of the carriages is remarkably small. It is clear that if an arrangement of this sort worked at all stiffly, it would impose an undesirable strain on the record. Care should be taken, both in fixing and in using the repeater, to see that the free passage of the tone-arm across the record is not impeded. This is very important. The instrument *can* be fixed to work freely, but it can also be fixed to work stiffly. Moreover, the clamp which goes on the tone-arm has an unfortunate trick on some machines of working loose after a little time and this may throw the whole thing out of adjustment. This is more likely to occur when the tone-arm has a pronounced taper. We advise the Linguaphone Company to study this point, since the success of their instrument will depend very largely on the method of fixing. For machines where the tone-arm is more than 1½ in. external diameter at the mid-point of its length the clamp which was supplied to us is too small. In its present form the instrument appears to be unsuitable for gramophones, such as external horn models, in which the tone-arm is carried on a bracket fixed to the back of the machine.

THE BALMAIN

(Patent 177215)

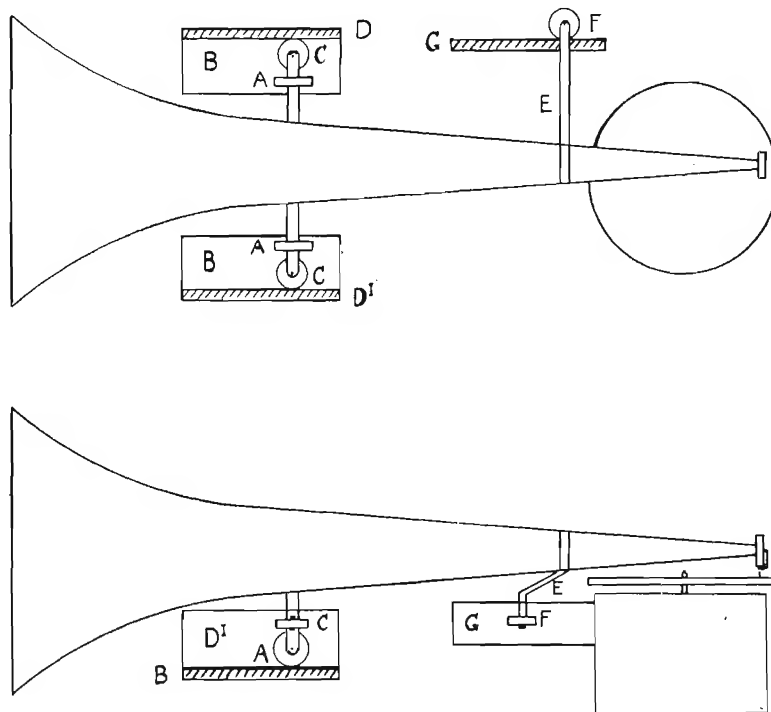
THIS machine was designed with the double purpose of eliminating the interferences due to the bends in the sound duct of the ordinary machine and the error in needle-tracking due to the swinging suspension of the tone-arm. Both objects have been successfully achieved as can be readily seen from the diagrams printed herewith. The plan view of the machine shows that the horn in addition to being carried on wheels (A in diagram) running on rails B, is retained in its straight path across the record by the side rollers C, which run between the parallel retaining walls or surfaces D and D¹. The wheels A carry the entire weight of the horn and the hooked retaining arm E, which is furnished with a roller F, which is pulled by the friction of the needle on the record against the upright G, along which it travels during the passage of the sound-box across the record. As surfaces G and D are in line the sound-box must traverse the record in an absolutely straight line, thus eliminating all tracking error. This ensures greater fidelity of reproduction and

freedom from record wear. In the side elevation the hooked arm E, with the side roller F, is shown appearing through the retaining wall G, which for the object of this sketch is constructed of glass as is also D¹. In this model no mercury is used, and the rails are arranged (by means of thumb-screws, not shown) to tilt, as required, to provide a gravity feed to carry the horn and sound-box across the record. Once set no further attention is required. The wheels may be so placed as to permit of the use of a sound-box of any weight without throwing on the record more than the 2 or 3 oz. weight necessary to efficient reproduction. Any sized sound-box, at any angle, may be used and still retain perfect tracking.

When changing records the horn is tilted and rests upon

a trip arm, not shown in the diagrams, as these are drawn for the purpose of easy comprehension, and are not strictly accurate as to scale details.

The wheels and rails may be replaced by floats on mercury as in the machine used by the Editor of this Magazine.



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MARGINALIA

By HAROLD F. BISS

INTRODUCTION.

IT has occurred to me that the promenade and symphony concert enthusiast who possesses a gramophone must surely take his musical pleasures seriously. At the present time he will find it a most unusual thing for any high class symphony concert programme not to contain a fair percentage of important works which have been recorded by one, at least, of the principal companies. There must be many such enthusiasts amongst the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE, and it is to these chiefly, I hope, this series of annotations will be of use and interest.

To those readers who are not yet acquainted with the many intricacies of the higher forms of orchestral composition, I would say that there can be few things of more absorbing interest on a winter's evening than the study of a great orchestral masterpiece in recorded form, by the aid of a miniature score and an annotated programme.

1. *Ave Maria*, for orchestra. Jacob Arcadelt.—This composer is believed to have been born about the year 1514, and he can be taken as fairly representing that school of the Netherlandish composers who migrated to Italy during the sixteenth century. He held the appointment of singing master to the choir of St. Peter's, Rome, and from about 1539 to 1549 was a member of the College of Papal Singers. He is perhaps best known by his masses and madrigals.

The orchestral setting of his *Ave Maria* by Sir Henry Wood commences with an exquisite old melody played above a restful rocking figure. The first exposition of the main theme is given out by a viola, solo, the next being played on two horns, the whole being gradually built up to an ecstatic height with a wonderful variety of instrumental colour before it fades slowly away in the lower strings, accompanied by deep and impressive chords for the organ. Throughout the work the organ weaves a spell of dignified breadth and impressiveness.

2. *Scherzo, L'Apprenti Sorcier*. Paul Dukas.—Paul Dukas was born in 1865 and is considered one of the most remarkable composers of the younger French school. His works show a marked individuality, noticeably so in his piano sonata and symphony. *L'Apprenti Sorcier* is an inspiration founded on a ballad by Goethe, entitled *Der Zauberlehrling*. During the absence of his master, the apprentice, lazy as all apprentices proverbially are, applies his fragmentary knowledge of wizardry in bewitching the broom, sending it to the river to draw water. The spell answers only too effectively, for before long everything in the house which is capable of containing water is filled to overflowing. To make matters thoroughly bad, the boy has forgotten the formula which should restore the broom to its normal uses and, cudgel his brains as he will, he cannot call it to mind. In his anxiety to put a stop to the flood of water he chops the broom in half, only to find that there are now two water-carrying vessels in the house instead of one. The sorcerer returns, just as the house is in danger of becoming washed away, and breaks the spell.

That is the fantastic programme around which Dukas has built his *Scherzo*, although individual themes are left rather to one's imagination. After a short introduction the soft mysterious opening theme is given out by the muted strings and might be intended to indicate the apprentice's spell. This theme is followed by another, played by the clarinet and then by the oboe and flute, suggesting the satisfactory working of the spell. The two themes are repeated and followed by a change of tempo and a lively freakish melody for the wood-wind emphatically suggests trouble. After a short development of these themes, the weird figure again

appears, suggesting, in a most grotesque manner, the hopelessly tangled state of affairs surging in the apprentice's mind. The *Scherzo* is introduced at this point by a long shake and a strong *crescendo*. The bassoon gives out a demoniac melody which is subjected to many varied forms of treatment, while there is an occasional return of the spell theme, reminding us of the apprentice in hopeless despair at the aqueous pranks of the bewitched broom. A new subject for glockenspiel and wood-wind indicates the two water-carrying imps, and this is followed shortly by a succession of impressive chords for brass—the sorcerer has returned and broken the spell. Two rapid bars bring the *Scherzo* to a conclusion.

3. *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, in G*, for strings. J. S. Bach.—The *Brandenburg Concerti*, six in number, were dedicated in 1721 by Bach to Christian Ludwig, Elector of Brandenburg. The third is scored, in the usual arrangement, for three violins, three violas, three violoncellos, and double bass. If one must generalise, it might be, strictly speaking, incorrect to term these works *Concerti*. Actually, they adhere more definitely to the form of the symphony.

The first movement of this concerto commences *allegro*, with a definite theme for full orchestra in three-part harmony, each of the three sections of the orchestra playing unison parts. At bar ten a second theme is given out by the violins, the violas playing quotations of the first notes of the opening subject. These notes are prominent throughout the movement. No contrast is offered by any slow movement, the *allegro moderato* being connected with the *gigue* by two chords.

It is interesting to note that the sinfonia of one of Bach's church cantatas is based upon this concerto, scored in slightly different form. I would suggest that any reader who can obtain Schweitzer's splendid works upon Bach will be amply repaid for his trouble.

4. *Finlandia—Symphonic Poem*. Sibelius.

5. *Præludium*. Järnefelt.

Less than a century ago musical culture in Finland was practically a non-existent factor in the country's educational system. The only music known was folk-music of a vigorous character and intensely national in spirit, but the cultivated and aesthetic aspects of music were almost unknown until 1835, when Pacius, as musical director of the University of Helsingfors, strove hard to establish a national school. Though of even more recent development than that of the new Russian school, Finnish music is becoming widely appreciated in Europe, notably the works of that gifted composer, Jean Sibelius. Without actually utilising the folk-song in the crude manner of Liszt, he has exploited the national musical treasures of Finland to the fullest extent. His is essentially the national style, embodying as it does the sombre gravity and innate sadness, paramount in an unfathomed race, swayed by superstition and struggling between the last stages of effete mediævalism and a slowly dawning civilisation. Other Finnish composers, however, are becoming known; the younger school of Ilmari, Cajanus, Järnefelt, and the brilliant Selim Palmgren, are exciting a keen interest in European musical circles. Palmgren alone is not so definitely morbid an acolyte of the national school, and his works, mainly pianistic, show a spirited temperament combined with a masterly handling of tone-colour, all of which demand a very high standard of technique in their execution. Moiseiwitsch is undoubtedly the finest exponent of Palmgren's pianoforte works.

4. *Finlandia—Symphonic Poem*. Sibelius.—This Symphonic Poem is an early work, and intensely national in spirit, though not, as many people imagine, founded directly

upon Finnish folk-tunes. The composer emphatically denies that the thematic material of *Finlandia* is other than his own. The work begins *Andante sostenuto*, with a religious solemnity, the first few introductory chords being scored for brass and the main theme for trombones. The next section changes to *Allegro moderato*, introducing a bold rhythmic dance figure; then quickening to *Allegro*, a theme of a martial nature is given out by the trombones, the effect being enhanced by the use of percussion and triangle. This is followed by a contrasting melody, a hymn-like folk-tune given out by the wood-wind, which is afterwards repeated by the strings with a richer orchestration, the work ending in a vigorous *coda*, based on the introductory theme.

5. *Præludium*. Järnefelt.—The scoring of the *Præludium* is most delicate and brilliant, the inclusion of the triangle and glockenspiel greatly enhancing its effectiveness. The strings commence a soft pizzicato figure, the oboe coming in at bar 4 with a lively fugal theme, *Allegro quasi allegretto*. This is taken up in turn by clarinet, bassoon, flute, horn, and trumpet. A second subject commences in the upper strings and is repeated in the wood-wind. The middle section is characteristically national in the idyllic pastoral melody, which is stated by a solo violin and afterwards by oboe and horn. The *tempo* then reverts to the more rapid first theme, which is repeated *fugato* as before.

HAROLD F. BISS

THE LIFEBELT

ARRANGEMENTS for supplying Lifebelts are gradually improving. They can only be obtained from the London Office, price 5s. each post free.

For gramophones with a Continental fitting (that is, where a tube projecting from the back of the sound-box fits directly into a socket at the end of the tone-arm), the Lifebelt can be fixed without using any adaptor. For gramophones with H.M.V. fitting (that is, where the end of the tone-arm fits into a recess or rubber back at the rear of the sound-box), an adaptor will be supplied with the Lifebelt free of charge. For Columbia machines a special form of adaptor can be supplied at an extra charge of 1s. The Lifebelt cannot be fitted to Edison machines, Cliftophones, or other gramophones in which the sound-box is screwed to a flange at the end of the tone-arm.

Directions for fitting and use are sent out with every Lifebelt. Our correspondence shows that if the best results are to be obtained these directions must be carefully followed. Some readers have reported that on their machines the Lifebelt is inclined to wobble. A number of these cases have been personally investigated by Mr. Wilson, who has found that the trouble usually arises either from faulty fitting, or because the needle angle is not steep enough or because there is too much weight on the record. Excessive weight affects not only the resiliency of the Lifebelt, but also causes the motor to be unsteady. A weight adjuster for goose-neck tone-arms was described in the February number, and an improved form of it is being placed on the market and will be available (price 7/6) by the time these lines are in print. We hope to publish a description of a counterbalance for Columbia and other straight tone-arms next month. Some readers have been in difficulty because when the Lifebelt is fixed the tone-arm will not swing far enough to enable the sound-box to reach the centre of the record. The remedy is to unscrew the tone-arm from the motor board and twist round its base until the sound-box will reach to the centre. It can then

be re-fixed in the new position. It is important that this point should not be overlooked.

Space does not permit us this month to print a number of selections from letters, but we publish an extract from a report by Mr. R. A. Nethersole since it relates to a Balmain machine. It will be remembered that it was on a Balmain that the Editor obtained the most convincing proof of the efficacy of the Lifebelt.

23. The Lifebelt is certainly a wonderful improvement at a very moderate figure. I have now given it about a month's trial and have endeavoured to avoid first impressions which are so often misleading, in gramophone matters, at any rate. I attach what I consider its six salient points, and of these I should put the second and third as being of first importance to the majority of gramophonists, as any attachment which can effect either of these desiderata will be an economy at 5s., and that is quite apart from any improvement in reproduction which may not affect every instrument to the same degree.

NOTES ON THE LIFEBELT

Instrument.—Balmain (5ft. cardboard horn, 18in. bell).

Soundboxes.—Saturn with Flex diaphragm and needle-tension attachment, and Pianina (mica diaphragm).

First point.—Greater flexibility, better reproduction, up to a point, when excessive torsion produces "wobble" in pitch. Pianina box not used again on this account, the least amount of flexibility producing "wobble" owing to the distance between needle point and centre of diaphragm being too great.* Continued with Saturn (2in. box).

Second point.—Browning Mummery singing *Your tiny hand DOES NOT BLAST*. (See also report No. 22, by Mr. G. Dimsdale.) Here is something worth at least 5s. Without the Lifebelt blast causes flattening of pitch, the record remained amongst the "unplayables" for that reason. Now it enters upon its second lease of life. To test if this point was peculiar to this one record, the Parlophone duet from *Butterfly* and *Andrea Chénier* was tried with the same result.

Third point.—Ability to use louder needles (Astra No. 1, extra loud tried) WITHOUT HARSHNESS AND NO PERCEPTIBLE INCREASE IN SCRATCH, giving the benefit of greater realism offset by no disadvantage so far as I can make out; certainly there is no greater wear on the record. I do not follow why this should be, but it undoubtedly is a fact.

Fourth point.—Strings have more "string" tone, they are not "blown." (Instance the Schumann Quintet, Vocalion.)

Fifth point.—Another definite improvement in the brass, the tuba in *Uranus*; the new recording plus the Lifebelt brings out the brass wonderfully.

Sixth point.—Drums. The drums in the Parlophone *Rienzi Overture* have lost their hollowness, and sound more like drums than I have ever heard on any gramophone before.

R. A. NETHERSOLE.

[* This can largely be overcome by using the springs described in the leaflet and by pushing the Lifebelt further on to the horn.—ED.]

THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written very legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.



FROM FIRST TO LAST

By Lt.-Col. G. O. TURNBULL, D.S.O.

I bought my first gramophone twenty years ago. I was serving on the Indian frontier at the time, and I remember that it cost me one hundred and twelve rupees eight annas, or £7 10s. in our depreciated currency. I believe I fell to an advertisement, for I had never heard a gramophone. It was a Monarch, made by the Gramophone and Typewriter Company—not yet H.M.V. It had a large brass horn which produced a truly prodigious volume of sound. I seem to remember hearing it a good five hundred yards down the road on a still hot weather night.

A gramophone needs sustenance. I soon discovered that the brute had a horrid appetite, even with the temperature at 120° in the shade; and it was not long before it was browsing on a matter of one hundred and fifty records—a fairly liberal diet for those days. This provender could only be obtained on the "Value payable," or cash on delivery, system from Calcutta, a distance of 1,500 miles. What was my musical taste in those days? Memory lingers fondly on such mixed fare as Melba's *Come back to Erin* (it cost a pound), Elman's *Souvenir de Moscow*, Harry Lauder's *The Wedding o' Lauchie McGraw*, and a pleasing song, whose name escapes me, with the refrain "Oh, do not wake me; let me dream again." There were also Florrie Forde in *The old Bull and Bush*, a piano record by Mme. Janotha, the Kaiser's court pianist, and some excellent vernacular records. I wonder whether any of your readers remember some rather fascinating records of a Spanish Gypsy orchestra. They had some really catchy airs with very unusual wood-wind effects. I should very much like to hear them again.

If the "Monarch" was the first gramophone I had ever heard it was certainly the first which the men of my regiment had ever listened to. I invited the whole battalion to come and hear it in the regimental school hut one evening. The place was packed with Sikhs, Punjabi Muhammadans, and wild trans-frontier Pathans, who had come to hear the "Baja"—a generic term which covers everything from a military band to a penny whistle. Music, I think, they were prepared for, but not singing or speaking. At the first words of a Bengali song a number of them bolted from the hut. Others, though they stood their ground, were obviously uneasy. The thing was clearly magic—and magic is always black magic till it has been proved to be white. After all, we have been there ourselves, and not so very long ago either. In fourteenth century England I should certainly have been burnt at the stake for reproducing His Master's Voice. Nowadays they take it out of you in income tax and an import duty on Polydors. Will a gramophone licence be the next atrocity? Winston forbid!

The Monarch was a hardy tyke. He accompanied the regiment into camp, marched up and down the frontier with it, and stuck out seven hot weathers without a day's leave to the hills. In 1912 he went with us to Hong Kong, where he encountered a serious rival in an Auxetophone, a stentorian prodigy with a turbine-operated super-charger, belonging to the officers of another Indian regiment. Perhaps it was the turbine that broke the Monarch's heart. He began to sing flat, and had to be put quietly away. I feel now that a very little of my present knowledge would have saved him.

The war broke all my gramophonic ties. I owned no gramophone, but I met one fiendish one in hospital. I say fiendish because it battered upon one unhappy record. It was singularly appropriate that this should have been *Somewhere a voice is calling*. "Somewhere" was, thank goodness, two wards away; but even that was too near. I hope I shall never have to hear that voice again.

In 1920 a misguided relative presented me with a really good gramophone, and started me once more upon the easy downward path. Not content with playing my gramophone, I began to play with it; I experimented. The sound-box and gadget fever took me. I conceived a passion for diaphragms—new diaphragms, lots of them. Soon I was making my own and filling the house with noxious vapours in the process. A desire possessed me to build a super-gramophone which would put all others in the shade. I read what literature I could find on the subject and had all sorts of notions for revolutionary designs. Fortunately they were too expensive to carry out; some were good, others ridiculously unsound. At this stage I came into touch with a real expert who put me on the right path and helped me in innumerable little ways. I reached a sane conception of straightforward and correct design; but again the expense of getting special orders carried out hung me up. Then one day I saw advertised a combination of tone-arm and amplifier which seemed to be just what I wanted. A visit to the advertiser and a demonstration of the results obtainable from his combination put me in a position to begin the building of my own instrument.

The new gramophone is an extraordinary success. Alas, like the Monarch, it must be fed, and its appetite is at once larger and more fastidious. For the Monarch *The old Bull and Bush*, 10in. single-sided, was a meal; the new monster devours whole symphonies at a gulp and asks for more. It has a private larder where a thousand choice discs await its pleasure. Even in these it does not find satiety. The appetite comes with eating.

G. O. TURNBULL.

A PLEA FOR MORE HANDEL

By D. M. G.

THE Christmas and New Year festivities have once more receded into the twilight of the past. In our grey metropolis there were during the period at least three performances by different societies of Handel's *Messiah* to large and even crowded houses, besides the wireless transmission from Manchester. Whence this amazing unique popularity? Some will have it, not without a sneer, that these performances are called for and attended merely as religious services, citing in evidence the worn-out jibe that the composer was taken over "bag and baggage" by the Church of England. Even if this were true it would not surely be derogatory, as a religious is still the highest of our ideals. We prefer to attribute those unusually frequent performances to the loveliness, simplicity, and intelligibility of the music itself. There have been critics in the past, and they are not without living representatives to-day, who have derided the solos in the *Messiah*, averring that these are of slender interest compared with the choruses. But it would be difficult if not impossible to select from any choral work such a group of thrilling airs, to mention only a few, as *Comfort Ye, He shall feed His flock, He was despised, I know that my Redeemer liveth*. Many more might be named. Of the choruses it is enough to say that the work includes the *Hallelujah*, without a performance of which no great State or public function is now thought to be complete. In short, the work while it is sometimes referred to as a musical epic is freely interspersed with exquisite tone-poems which, from their purity, lyrical sweetness, and charm have captured the imagination and heart of successive generations.

Now a question here arises: How is it that the other works of this composer are so seldom heard? Performances, indeed, of *Israel*, *Judas Maccabæus*, *Samson*, *Acis*, and *Alexander's Feast* are no doubt not infrequently given, but what do our people generally know of the hundred other works of this master musician? Only solitary airs from the oratorios and operas detached from their surroundings, and consequently less effective, but unforgettable for their limpid beauty and never-failing charm. Of these evergreens there may be named the *Largo*, *Lascia ch'io pianga*, *Where'er you walk*, *O sleep*, *O had I Jubal's lyre*—all inimitable lyric tone-poems, breathing affectionate pathos in every note, and known and loved by all in our heart of hearts.

And then, also, think how little is generally known of Handel's instrumental music! Till lately the only pieces in use to be frequently performed, apart from the *March in Saul* and *The Conquering Hero* (which are now national possessions), were *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, the *Overture to the Occasional Oratorio*, and the *Minuet in Berenice*. Now, thanks to the gramophone companies, the public are happily in possession of many more delightful specimens of the master's work. In particular, attention may be called to selections from *The Water Music*, arranged by Sir Hamilton Harty, and the *Hautboy Concerto*. But, having regard to the enormous number of overtures, concertos, and sonatas left by the master, these tiny portions are far from giving an adequate representation of his genius. Why are they so neglected? It cannot possibly be, as is sometimes alleged, that they are not worth reviving. The grip of the *Messiah* and of those immortal airs already referred to upon the vast mass of the nation disprove that utterly. The man who composed such perfect tone-poems was more likely than not to leave a vast amount of exquisite music, and this, in fact, is the case. Here are a few pertinent lines from an able writer. "It is possible," says Mr. Robinson in "Handel and his Orbit," "that the airs (almost successive)—*Verdi prati*, *Ombre Pallide*, *Credete al mio dolore*, *Un momento de contento*,

Sta nell, *Ircana*, in *Alcina*, to take an example—may have been surpassed, each in its several way, by different later composers. None the less, any man who can sit down lightly to match the set is very cordially to be congratulated." Most true! Dip into Handel, therefore, wherever you choose, you will invariably discover something supremely beautiful.

On glancing through Dr. Burney's survey of Handel's operas one is amazed at the frequency with which he asserts that certain airs are "for all time." Of *Verdi prati*, above mentioned (which is still occasionally heard), he says: "It is always a new and charming composition whenever it is revived by a singer of sufficient abilities to do it justice." Now this brings us near if not entirely to the reason for the comparative neglect from which the composer's music suffers. Can present-day performers do the requisite justice to his music? We are sure they could if they had only the perseverance—a quality at present regrettably conspicuous by its absence in other walks of life. When Cuzzoni, one of the master's great exponents, was singing one of his airs, a man in the gallery thrilled the audience by shouting that she had "a nest of nightingales in her bosom"! But this may be almost paralleled by a press critique the other day on Miss Hempel's rendering of *O had I Jubal's lyre*, which, evidently compelled by the influence of sheer musical beauty, ran that her singing of it was like "strings of pearls"! So also with his instrumental pieces. Years ago the writer got His Master's Voice gramophone record of Kubelik's rendering of the *Adagio* and *Allegro* of the *Sixth Sonata* (the twelfth in Arnold's edition of the master's works). It is a very simple-looking piece indeed, but, with Kubelik's playing (and he plays every note purely as in Arnold), especially the *Adagio*, it sounds the tenderest and deepest chords of the human heart. And then the *Allegro* is so bright and jolly and beautifully phrased that it never palls on repetition. Of such a composition it has been truly said: "Superficially there is nothing in it. A violinist of extremely moderate abilities can play it with ease. There is, however," (and this is the point), "a great deal more in the sonata than the mere notes"; and, speaking of a rendering by Mr. Heifetz, the same writer said: "The most beautiful thing in the whole programme was the rendering of the Handel *Sonata*. The manner in which Mr. Heifetz brought out the spirit of the work, its grave beauty and distinction, was something of a revelation." Thus it is always. The master's works are full of those lyric gems; but, not being so simple as they look, much painstaking practice and sympathetic insight are needed to sound the depths of their serene beauty, and in these days of hurry-scurry and flashy noisy music fit interpreters are few. But once adequately grasped and performed, their appeal, like all things truly great, is not to a privileged few but is universal.

Much of present-day music comes, of all countries, from Russia—that flat and gloomy continent. What the musicians of our country find in those Eastern prelections—so depressing and melancholy, is a mystery, and can only be explained by some wretched kindred or fellow-feeling. O hateful melancholy, product of a diseased or disordered mind. Away, away with it, into the limbo of forgotten things! Our music masters, by their never-ending reiteration of such productions, are sadly fomenting the darkling outlook of our day, and the time has more than come for a return to the bright and joyous music of our own composers, chief of whom is Handel. He lived with us for nearly fifty years, or three-fourths of his entire life, absorbed our idiom, entered into the nation's joys and sorrows, fought many a tough battle in the rough-and-tumble of eighteenth century life, upheld

his integrity unflinchingly in the face of formidable opposition, had fierce financial troubles from which he emerged victorious, and sounded alike the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity. Full of this wide experience of human nature, his music naturally inspires to loftiest ambitions, is bright, manly, invigorating, triumphant, and its cosmopolitan range and sanity endear it to all loyal and patriotic souls. As Edward Fitzgerald said: "His is the music for a great active people."

Now, what is needed is that the powerful influence of THE GRAMOPHONE, already warmly manifested in many a sympathetic article, should continue to be employed towards the reproduction in record form of much more of Handel's music, for the inspiring tone and spirit of which the nation stands badly in need. Scan again those glorious works—oratorios and operas—and sample their beauties. He wrote about a thousand arias or songs of every shade of feeling and emotion, pathetic, amatory, joyous, exuberant, courageous, martial, noble, regal, majestic. Not a string of the human heart did he leave untouched. The very greatest honour fell to his music in his own time. "Many of his minuets," says Mr. Schoelcher, "are delicious, especially in

Tamerlane. That in *Ariadne* was so much in request that every fiddler in town and country scraped it about; it was set to words which were sung in the streets, as well as in the drawing-room, and nothing but it was heard for six months. The gavotte in the *Overture of Otho* must have been not less popular, for it was played from one end to the other of the three kingdoms upon every kind of instrument; as Burney says, from the organ to the salt-box."

Now what are our gramophone companies doing that they neglect those inspired, once so adored, and still adorable melodies? They lie waiting the genuine artists to sing and play them and he or she will not have to do so to an unappreciative public. Nay, honour and fame, to say nothing of abounding profit await the enlightened pioneer. The B.B.C. are regrettably losing their chance and missing "the tide in their affairs." How sadly they serve the listeners with their dull, mournful and depressing programmes. When an air from the English Handel does by some chance find its way into the evening's entertainment it is ardently longed for, and assuredly is like a little stream of water among the thirsty rocks.

D. M. G.

VIRGIN SOIL

By H. A. COURSE

S.S. *Newralgia*,
BRISTOL CHANNEL,

December 7th, 19—.

DEAR GEORGE,—That dance that you made me wait for has been the cause of my striking this packet; so that should my letter string out into serial form, you will only have yourself to blame. By our present speed, we don't look like breaking many records this trip, and altogether I think I am in for a pretty putrid time. As regards the old tub herself, she belongs to the Hake and Payne line, which numbers among its fleet, the most jerrybuilt, badly-fitted boats in the universe. It was only last year that the *Newmonia*, a sister ship of this caterpillar, ran up against a wave and fell to pieces. The previous man here had nine months of her, and now takes his well-earned holiday. No more dances to make me late back from my leave if this is to be the result.

Luckily, I have a new, though somewhat mild form of recreation. Brownlow (my predecessor), sold me (don't grin) a gramophone for 30s., as he did not want the trouble of taking it away. After the deal, he casually remarked that the steward had accidentally bestowed his bulk on the records. The results would be obvious to you, were you to see that member of the crew. I have promised to take a snap of him, but I am afraid it will mean using a whole film, and making a sort of panoramic view by joining the sections together after development.

Well, to get on with the tale. I rushed up town to finish my shopping; went into a gramophone shop and bought some discs. Quite a pretty girl in the shop. My choice included all the latest dances and popular titles; no dull old stuff for me. I then rushed off to other shops while the girl packed up my parcel. I must try the machine to-morrow; lucky I thought of needles.

December 9th.—I think that I have cooled down enough now to write without setting fire to the paper. Yesterday was decidedly *not* dull; it was in fact in its way quite thrilling. After five hours' duty in the wireless room, I thought that I would try some music. I took off the wrapper of the record parcel, and lifted the lid off the box. There, in

a bed of shavings, reclined that illustrious potentate *The Mikado* in album complete. At first my feeble intellect refused to grasp what had happened. Then it dawned on me that the girl (quite a plain girl, I remember) in the shop must have given me the wrong parcel. I felt a bit moist, I can tell you, as I snatched the first disc out of the album. I noticed that it was called *The Mikado*, Overture, Part 1. Unfortunately (?) it slipped out of my hand and hit against the bulkhead. I was out of the cabin before the pieces reached the deck. Same day, later.—I have come across one unbroken record called *Longing for Hawaii*, with *Chimes in the Bay* on the other side. Perhaps it will be endurable, I must try it.

December 13th.—This trip is brightening up a bit, now that we are running into better weather. Also the old record that I found has proved very good, though I must confess to its slight monotony. The first day I *Longed for Hawaii* eleven times. *Chimes in the Bay* was a good second with ten goes. Yesterday *C. in the B.* beat the other one by two. I wish I had a little variety. You can guess what I am thinking about that person in the gramophone shop at Carsea.

December 14th.—Everything wrong to-day; first the aerial broke loose; two hours' work fixing that. Then I made a healthy scratch on my record, which will prevent me from *Longing for Hawaii* in comfort any more. The *Mikado* is still hibernating in his shavings, I haven't the heart to disturb him. A school of porpoises passed quite near the ship, I pelted them with fragments of the overture, but failed to register a hit. More later.

December 23rd.—We called at St. Vincent (Cape Verde Islands) for bunkers, but were only there for fifteen hours. An outward bound mailboat which left England ages after us, arrived at the same time as we did, so that we got a few newspapers. Which reminds me, I haven't turned out Brownlow's papers and books, which he left on board when he finished here.

December 25th, Christmas Day, 11.30 p.m.—What a hectic day! We crossed "The Line" this afternoon, and our course took us quite close to St. Paul's Rocks, which is the first outpost of South America. I will give you a brie

résumé of our Christmas banquet. The chief and, I might add, only item in the first part of the menu was tinned rabbit. Judging by the amount of other raw material included, the ratio of rabbits to tins must have been about 1 to 25. This pastoral delicacy was followed by Christmas pudding. It was a fruitless effort, at least my portion was, though I must confess that the second mate (a stout trencherman) found two currants in his third helping. We finished up with six glasses of port between five of us. The draw for the odd glass did not interest me very much.

Among Brownlow's papers I found a copy of *The Mikado* words nearly complete. It starts off with "If you want to know who we are" (I don't) "We are gentlemen of Japan," or some such twaddle. I shall just try over the first record to see if it is the same play.

December 26th.—Yes, it is the same play, or I should say light opera as I see it is called. I went through the whole lot of the records yesterday with the aid of the book. That is to say, all except one, where a page is torn out. This is particularly annoying as it contains the last part of "Were you not to Koko plighted," and John Harrison is none too clear.

December 29th.—Got thoroughly irritated over the missing words, after trying it over seven times straight off. Must have another shot.

January 1st.—At 12.1 a.m. I was on watch in the wireless room, so I made a New Year resolution always to pick up the wrong parcel in future. I am getting confoundedly fond of this music, wish I had taken an interest in gramophones before. I have wisely given up trying to catch those elusive

phrases, it was too great a strain on temper and needle supply. I caught myself humming *Tit-willow* this morning, and suddenly remembered having heard it years ago. You must recollect the occasion; that ass Oscar Vincent tried to recite and broke down five times.

January 7th.—Arrived at Montevideo and waiting in the roads for orders. The old man thinks it will be Rosario.

Later.—Rosario it is! The up-river pilots join us to-morrow, and then hey-ho for a dose of mosquitoes.

January 9th, 11 p.m.—No sleep just yet. About the worst dose of mosquitoes I have ever struck. Naturally, the dear old *Neuralgia* has no nets to offer for the protection of its long-suffering crew. Of all the ill-equipped barges!!! Its a wonder that they remembered an engine. We are now anchored off Mosquito Island. If ever a spot was aptly named, this was. As the sun set, every "skeeter" in South America came to have a look at "The Greyhound of the South Atlantic," and each one took away a little souvenir of its visit, in the form of a small portion of my hands, neck, ankles, etc. By this, you will see that Rosario has soon eaten its way into my affections.

I really must finish off now, for I want this to catch the mail to-morrow. Where we go after leaving here I naturally don't know yet, but anyway keep cheery till I turn up again.

Yours, in spite of suffering,

TED.

P.S.—Shall try to get some discs here, though I expect it will be all Dago stuff.



CHAT

By "INDICATOR"

THE human mind works sometimes in peculiar ways. A chap said to me "Why the dickens do my springs always break in the same place, two or three inches from the end nearest the winding spindle?" His springs, too, are so frequently breaking. But the way he gets in a temper about the particular spot at which they break makes it sound as though if they would only break somewhere else he would be satisfied. The reason is that the tempering is taken out just there for the hole to be punched, and the re-tempering cannot re-establish the equality of strength; hence the advisability of not letting motors run all out; leave three or four winds of spring round spindle, so that the critical spot is covered and the starting strain taken further along spring. Also, wind with a firm strong hand without jerks, and slower after long use; "respect old age."

* * *

The tale goes that Frederick the Great, when his soldiers hesitated to follow him across a gun-swept bridge, yelled "Come on you devils, do you want to live for ever?" The same applies to the expectation of some fellows in regard to their gramophone parts (I won't say records), springs, rubber gaskets of sound-boxes, micas, and the paraphernalia generally. Really, renewals are periodically necessary, only for goodness sake know thyself; art thou a clumsy beggar, then touch not that sacred thing the sound-box, or, for the matter of that, anything. Doctors of varying degrees of divinity and otherwise exist in the trade; go to them and save money, equanimity, and often domestic felicity.

Is there a more forward record than Martinelli's *O muto asil del pianto*, H.M.V., D.B.339? I doubt it. There was a ten-inch Zanelli, *Dans mes voyages*, since cut out by H.M.V. (Zeus knows why it did not sell well), which ran the Martinelli close for forwardness; I have it, and remember the first time it was played at home I got a box on the ears from the startled spouse. Another record it is advisable to give warning about is that Caruso *Testa adorata*, H.M.V., D.B.122, a beautiful record. Whilst speaking of "startlers," I was at a friend's house with some of my records, and handed out to play the ten-inch Vocalion X.9133, *Wee MacGreegor Patrol*, Life Guards. It commences in the distance and works up. The hostess was sitting on a low round ottoman, knitting, when the Scottish yell came it startled the lady off on to the floor. Of course, "malice prepense" is always attributed to one in such cases.

* * *

Painfully little is the help one can extend in response to the cry of "our poor," but one of my favourite indications is the Classic Symphony Orchestra series of 12in. Regal; go, ye financial sufferers, hear them all. I think the two best are G.1000, Offenbach's *Barcarolle* with Rachmaninoff's *Prelude*, and G.1019, Suppé's *Light Cavalry Overture*. An Aberdonian gram-fan, when I played him one, caught a distant glimpse of the red label, and murmured "one of your confounded Victors, I suppose," so that was a sort of quality compliment; and it was a real northern glint that came into his eye as I replied, "No, cheap Regal."

AN IMPRESSION

By H. L. WILSON

I HAD chosen, as title, "The Great Passion," but this, I fear, might apply as effectively to the mania with which many of us have become afflicted, as to the subject of my discourse. In both cases, by the way, a diagnosis would probably reveal the existence of the same symptoms, and to avoid any possible misunderstanding, the appellation of "la grande passion" is, perhaps, necessary to distinguish the one from the other less passionate state of mind. At any rate, it is of the "grande passion" that I wish to treat at the moment. One cannot very well write in words of fire upon the subject of gramophobia, that fell disease from which there is no escape for the unwary, once its tentacles have secured a hold; a disease which, in all good time, becomes nothing less than an all-devouring monster. But one can write in words etc. of that tender emotion which, so they say, rules the world. I refer to Love.

Of the romantic school, Chopin, Schumann and Liszt, in particular, breathe in many of their works for the pianoforte the spirit of the troublesome little god which inspired their conception, and in which are expressed in most natural and unmistakable manner tender messages and charming thoughts, the portent of which one can easily guess. The fiery and impetuous Liszt wrote three short nocturnes known under the title of *Liebesträume* (Dream of Love). They were composed during the composer's Italian period and originally intended as songs. One of these little works (the third) has been re-arranged by Tito Schipa from the pianoforte version for vocal performance, and it is thus, through the medium of the voice, that Schipa presents it. It is a Neapolitan canzone of which Schipa makes much. The glorious tenor sings it

in so impassioned a style, in accents which in turn languish in soft amorous appeals and rise again to great passionate heights, in which the personality of the singer so wholeheartedly enters as to compel the very highest enthusiasm. If the secret of Chaliapine's and McCormack's success is their ability to live their songs, Schipa's achievement, in like manner, is a triumph.

Schipa provides us with a performance entirely free from melodramatic suggestion. His is a perfect conception, if ever there was one, of what the love serenade should be. In this song of Liszt's Schipa is the very embodiment of the ardent lover; he enacts again, for our delectation, the tender balcony scene in which Romeo addresses his lovely Juliet. He brings into the drawing room the atmosphere of the scented garden, the purple starry heavens of the Shakespearian lovers' paradise, the ravishing figure of the loved one, the appealing accents of the lover filled with an "interminable and inextinguishable" love. And the poet's speech is clothed in music which not merely echoes the dreamy longing of the lover, but invests it with the very breath of life. I do not suggest that Schipa's words are those of Shakespeare. But whatever they are I can write with certainty of the message they intend to convey.

Wonderful Liszt! Wonderful Schipa! A great performance indeed; a veritable chef d'œuvre.

The record (Victor, Red Seal, No. 6543, 12 inch double-sided) is a recording by the new process and is remarkable for its realistic pianoforte accompaniment. On the reverse side is an *Ave Maria* of Schipa's own composition.

THE AVERAGE MAN'S CHOICE OF RECORDS

By EDWARD L. MURPHY

I N the October issue of THE GRAMOPHONE we had an article on "A Working Man's Choice of Records." It is about time we had an article on the records of the average man. By the average man I mean the man who cannot afford over two pounds on *Parsifal*, however charming it may be. The average man chooses his records carefully with regard to price and performance. He likes to get good value for his money. No wonder that Parlophone records are so popular. They give good music at a cheap price. And because of this the average man buys them.

Mr. Emms in the October issue said that military band records form the base of his collection. There is a fascination about band records. They are so cheap and good. But when purchased to excess they become tiresome. My programmes usually contain a balance of orchestral and vocal items. If any reader thinks he cannot get a good orchestral record under 6s. 6d. let him try *The Entrance of the Gods* on Parlophone E.10110. The Columbia and H.M.V. orchestral records have the benefit of being played by world-famous orchestras, but still they should be cheaper. Light orchestral items are always a success. Three good ones are *Selection from Katja* (Parlo. E.10241), *Liebesträume* (Parlo. E.10099), and *Manon* (H.M.V., C.1059). All these should be purchased. If you can

only afford one buy *Liebesträume*. Good vocal records are scarcer. Hear Columbia 2715 and H.M.V., C.1007. Frank Mullings and Peter Dawson are at their best in these. And if you do want celebrities get the ten-inch discs of McCormack and also of Alma Gluck. They are nearly all good, and you can hardly go wrong. In the instrumental section Marie Novello on Winner 3424, 3443, and 3768 is excellent. The *Moonlight Sonata* on Columbia 410 is fairly good. Band records are plentiful. The two best I know of are the *Mikado Selection* (Columbia 3041) and *Poet and Peasant* (Regal 67094). A popular song is always pleasing to an audience. Layton and Johnstone in *What'll I do?* (Columbia 3510) are splendid. Billy Desmond on Aco. G.15810 should not be forgotten. If you like the Hawaiian guitar buy the *Song of the Volga Boatmen* (Winner 7101); it's fine. If you want jazz stick to Vincent Lopez. Four records of his only cost 10s., and keep you in dance music for a year. Try E.5354, E.5388, E.5264, E.5338, and I am sure you will be satisfied.

I hope you will buy some of the records I have mentioned. The average man is not catered for at present. Look at the winning list of records in the October issue. Out of the first twenty-five there was no record below 4s. 6d. The bigger companies should give us good music at a reasonable price.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

REAL APPRECIATION.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I should like to say how much I value and appreciate THE GRAMOPHONE. As a working man, I am one of the old poor, and every shilling I spend has to be carefully looked at. Nevertheless I can honestly say that although my record purchase only averages about two cheap records per month, I have more than saved the money spent on the journal by following your advice. Perhaps it may not seem much to you, but I can assure you that when one has gone short of a meal to buy a gramophonic tit-bit, it is very disheartening to find that the celebrity is out of form or has chosen the song unwisely. Might I appeal for just a little more space for the cheaper makes of records? Especially when giving the excellent accounts of composers or Mr. Klein's entertaining articles if he could tell us of a fairly decent record in place of those H.M.V. D.B.'s, which are out of a poor man's reach.

I should be glad if you can let me have the Lifebelt by Saturday as the week end is my only chance of playing. Thanking you for all you have done for me. I remain, yours truly,
London, N.W. 10. E. J. IMPEY.

THE GRAMOPHONE IN AMERICA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—In the January GRAMOPHONE Mr. H. L. Wilson flung down a gauntlet. As an American I write, not to take up his gauntlet, but to corroborate his criticism of that part of our musical taste as is revealed in the catalogues of our recording companies.

McCormack and Kreisler merely supply the demand of our musical market.

The programmes of Willem Mengelberg, as leader of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, are not the programmes of Willem Mengelberg, as leader of the New York Philharmonic.

Because of his "personality," whatever that may mean, or of his tailor, his audiences condone Stokowski's frequent excursions into untrodden fields, but they do not care what it is all about, and welcome his return to second hand fields and old pastures. The *Pathétique* fits us like a warm bath.

Well, why not? Our national culture, so far, derives from the development, in a prodigiously rich environment economically, of the Puritan strain. Emotionally or spiritually, if you prefer, the Puritan lives in the future; the life of to-day is for him always an unworthy life. Once, no doubt, this was a real conviction. Now it is but an influence, atavistic perhaps, but a real influence still, though weakened by growth amidst great national riches. What more logical than that we should find our release in an intellectual and emotional pseudo-romanticism. Hence music becomes a pleasant noise, an escape from boredom.

What can be done about it? Nothing.

There remain two factors; one which *may* affect our culture, one which *inevitably* will.

The first is problematic. It is the effect on a once Puritanic, now Peter Panic, culture of the injection into it of a Jewish, and of a South Mediterranean, strain simultaneously with an increasing trend of the native stock from the country to the city.

The second factor is inescapable. It is the changed attitude toward life and its living that will follow an increasing paucity of material resources. Sooner or later this must come. Now we are at the height of our material power. We have yet to realise that this power was the result more of our forests, minerals and land than of our genius. As the margin of life narrows we will have to find in ourselves a substitute for our toys. Then, perhaps, we shall hear what Bach and Mozart are saying to us, nor, until then, need we look for a Bach or Mozart among us of our own. Perhaps. And, of course, any one of my compatriots can confute me utterly by telling me, what I have so often read, of the amount of money we spend each year on music. Sincerely yours,

Washington.

FREDERIC H. POWELL.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—To be sure, an American reader wishes to give some return to Mr. Wilson's ideas about America, as related to gramophone ideals. I want to see if I can correct a few errors into which Mr. Wilson has been led. It would be fruitless for me to write to Mr. Edison for the purpose of converting him, as he is too busy to bother. In fact, he is said to sleep between five and six hours a day, the remainder being spent in steady work.

Well, to the point. The Edison machine cannot be compared favourably with the Victrola, not even the old model just before the Orthophone of the Victor Company, and the Panatrope of the Brunswick Company. The older gramophones (although an American, I like that name more than "phonograph") and the records as yet unimproved (to the point of those which were brought out a few months before the new machines) had much less surface scratch and "static" (do you call it "strays"?) noises. I expect I am making too many parentheses. Edison owners always seem to be ready to be offensively defensive in behalf of their choice. It seems to be a case like the man who can be insulted by a true accusation. He could stand it if it were not true.

The Edison process will not permit the recording of orchestras of many pieces. I do not know all the reasons of this mechanical capacity being omitted, but all of us who know that orchestra music is becoming more and more liked, and more popular, can see that the gramophone must play such music.

Mr. Edison is distinctly and emphatically wrong in saying the American people do not like good music. He should stop to consider that people who live in small towns and away from places where music can be afforded on a large scale must develop their musical taste by such means as singing and instrumental music on a small scale, and by the gramophone. Now, just two points about the latter. First the machines are all priced too high. Second, not enough good music is mixed with the "other kind," and incidentally the records also frighten the buyer, by their price. I cannot go by this without saying that out of such exorbitant prices for records, the composers receive entirely too little royalty, even in England. This is an injustice and should be changed. In this country, where there is less competition of gramophone manufacturers, too much profiteering is accomplished on the part of these companies.

To make a point about people liking music I shall tell this true story. I once had an argument with a musician (I pretend to be one, too) about modern music being popularised. He said that people do not appreciate good music when they hear it, so why try? Well, my idea was and is that no one is ever going to have the opportunity to like anything unless he is exposed to it, more or less. People like things because they learn them, then they like more things because of the foundation of the first. I am really an admirer of Mr. Edison, but he ought to be a factor in popularising good music, with his position and wealth. Of course, he is doing other great work. This country is coming to the front in the ways of art. I think France held sway until death; England is now holding it, and the tidal wave of culture is heading west, for America. We are having great composers born to us now and it seems probable that this country will be able to claim the greatest composer inside of twenty-five years. I am digressing.

I must agree with Mr. Wilson that many "melodious snippets" are perpetrated on us, but indeed there are many and increasing, who resent the fact. I believe Kreisler does so, more from the fact that he is from the waltz country than because he is playing for the American audience. Now who will deny that until America becomes the country having the most and greatest creators, that she will borrow the art of Europe? Well, as long as she does, she gets what is given, namely, Kreislerian saccharinities. I happen to like Kreisler, too. He is mistaken.

With Mr. Wilson I may be classed an "orchestral fiend." I suppose he has learned of the new recording process by now. That explains the new tones he marvelled at. We are getting some fine orchestra music recorded over here now. Much of Stravinsky.

I must say that the methods of the English Companies, shops, and all concerned, that I know anything about, seem admirable in the light of helping people to grow in the love of music. It is not the same close brotherhood here where there is much space and the people are distributed over it. We feel wonder at the English, in their little, almost unnoticeable conveniences, such as miniature scores prepared for the gramophiles, and many other generous considerations of the happiness and comfort of the fellow-being.

Mr. Wilson wanted someone to steal his glove, but I would like to shake his hand on raising to light a few ideas which may "come out in the wash." If I have not answered everything I would be glad to try to do so to Mr. Wilson's satisfaction.

Springfield, Missouri.

Sincerely,
ERNEST BROOKS.

RECORDS OF SPEECH.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—It has often, I feel sure, occurred to members of the N.G.S. and to your readers generally, that the gramophone might be used to record the speaking of verse. To have fine verse well spoken as a permanent possession would be to many a source of great and enduring pleasure. We have at present some actors and actresses whose verse-speaking is always a delight; it would be a national loss if their art could not be enjoyed by posterity. Isn't it something of a disgrace, considering the possibilities of the gramophone, that we can no longer hear even echoes of Forbes-Robertson's beautiful speaking as Hamlet?

I have ventured, in the belief that many will agree, to outline a few suggestions of records that might be made of such artists as Miss Edith Evans, Miss Athene Seyler, Mr. Henry Ainley, Mr. Leon Quartermaine, and last and greatest, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson. Supposing that these artists could be induced to record; could it be done under the auspices of the N.G.S.? The recording of Shakespeare and other English poets is perhaps not a commercial proposition which the ordinary recording companies would entertain; and the N.G.S. exists to supply such deficiencies. Of course, the N.G.S. is concerned with the recording of music; but it may seem to many that the music of Shakespeare's verse would not be alien to it. These records should, I think, be voluntary to members. It would be possible to see by voting how great the demand would be for them.

Well, Sir, here is my suggested list—a beginning only, and I venture to think that if only the project could be carried through the result would be to do honour to English poetry, and to give ourselves and others a keen and lasting pleasure:—

Sir J. Forbes-Robertson (10in., d.s.).—(1) *Hamlet*: the "Hecuba" Soliloquy. (2) *Hamlet*: "To be or not to be."

Henry Ainley (10in., d.s.).—(1) *a. Prologue to Hassan* (Flecker); *b. Serenade from Hassan* (with orchestra): "How splendid in the morning," etc. (2) Prospero's speech from *The Tempest* ("Our revels now are ended," IV., i., 148).

Henry Ainley (10in., d.s.).—(1) An ode of Keats. (2) A passage from Milton.

Leon Quartermaine (10in., d.s.).—(1) From Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, the "Helen" speech, and the last two pages of the play. (2) *a. The "Persian Dawn" speech from Hassan* (page 76) *b. A short lyric* (Shelley? Rossetti?).

Edith Evans and Leon Quartermaine (10in., d.s.).—(1) From Congreve's *The Way of the World*. (2) *A Winter's Tale*, IV., iv 103 to 158 (Florizel and Perdita).

Edith Evans and Henry Ainley (10in., d.s.).—(1) *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV., xv., 9 to 68 (Antony's death). (2) *Twelfth Night*, II., iv., 82 to 127 (Orsino and Viola), or the whole of this scene with "Come away, Death," might be given on a 12in., d.s.

Edith Evans and Athene Seyler (10in., d.s.).—(1) *Twelfth Night* I., v., 235 to 307 (Viola and Olivia). (2) *As you like it*, III., ii., 171 to 260 (with cuts) (Rosalind and Celia).

Edith Evans, Leon Quartermaine, and Athene Seyler (10in., d.s.).—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I., i., 128 to 251.

Athene Seyler and Leon Quartermaine (12in., d.s., possibly 10in.).—(1) *Merchant of Venice*, V., i., 1 to 88 (cutting from 22 to 50, Lorenzo and Jessica), with string quartet. (2) *As you like it*, III., ii., 310 to 450 (with cuts) (Orlando and Rosalind).

Henry Ainley and Leon Quartermaine (10in., d.s.).—(1) From *Hassan*, pages 78–81 (Hassan and Ishak). (2) *Othello*, III., iii., 330 to 478 (with cuts).—Or, alternatively 12in., d.s.: (1) Scene from *Hassan*, pages 78–81 (Caliph, Malcolm Keen); this scene gets in the "Persian Dawn" lyric and some excellent prose. (2) *Julius Caesar*: The quarrel between Brutus and Cassius.

Edith Evans and Leon Quartermaine (12in., d.s.).—*Romeo and Juliet*: The balcony scene.

Edith Evans (10in., d.s.).—(1) *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: Mrs. Page reads Falstaff's letter, II., i., 1 to 32. (2) *Antony and Cleopatra*, V., ii., 282 to 325 (Cleopatra's death).

This is a lengthy letter, but it was necessary to make specific suggestions so that the project might be fully discussed.

I am, Sir,

BERNARD MONK.

P.S.—I have not touched at all on the educative aspect of this matter.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Some time ago I got some of the Dramatic records of Southern and Marlow from the Victor catalogue. They are red label, but are fine value—as value in records goes. They are all selected from the Shakespearean plays and are most enjoyable. Now it has occurred to me that a complete play—either Shakespearean or otherwise—would be a profitable innovation for the Gramophone Co. or the Columbia people to present to the public. I think they would meet with warm and material support from the public and would not be so expensive to produce as the albums of opera which are so fine and so popular. I suggested this to the H.M.V. people and with their customary courtesy they promised to consider my suggestion. Might I appeal to your readers to give strong support should such a desire materialise? More, could we not, between us all, raise such a commotion that they would see the need of a complete play? Perhaps you will insert this letter in your issue.

Another matter (I hope I am not using too much of your space). Could the H.M.V. people not make albums for the records of *Tristan and Isolde*, the parts of *The Ring* and *Meistersinger*, and sell them separately to those who already have the records? A collection of these records, in their respective albums—done, say, like *Parsifal* or *Butterfly*—would be well worth the possession.

Yours faithfully,

ELLIS CLEGG.

Accrington.

THE PRICE OF RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have noticed in THE GRAMOPHONE from time to time letters from dissatisfied correspondents grumbling at the high prices charged for records nowadays. While agreeing that certain discs issued each month would be dear at any figure, surely taken as a whole the catalogue prices are very moderate. For 6s. 6d. we are offered double-sided orchestral records by famous organisations of sixty or seventy performers under the direction of leading conductors, and often added to this is a chorus of over thirty singers. Further, for 8s. 6d. we have an enormous choice of 12in. double-sided records by celebrity singers and players. Now, if we refer for a moment to the good old days of peace and plenty, what do we find? Celebrity records were 12s. 6d. each single-sided, and we cheerfully paid 5s. 6d. for a 12in. record, also single-sided, of a few bars of an orchestral work by, say, a dozen or so members of the Albert Hall Orchestra, under Sir Landon Ronald. I fail entirely to see any reasonable grounds for complaint on the score of exorbitant charges; rather I think the companies concerned are to be congratulated on their enterprise.

Yours faithfully,

MOORE ORR.

Hillingdon.

LIGHTER FARE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As a keen and enthusiastic reader of THE GRAMOPHONE and knowing what an influence your publication has on the various recording companies, I would venture to suggest a few titles of the lighter kind of orchestral music which, I feel sure, the public would welcome and appreciate—viz.: *Entr'acte*, *La Colombe* (Gounod), a delightful piece for strings, horns, etc. *Marche Militaire* (Gounod), tuneful, bright, and appropriate. Ballet music by the same composer, *La Reine de Saba*. Meyerbeer's ballet music, *Prophet*, and *Robert le Diable*, *Entr'acte No. 2*, *Rosamunde* (Schubert), the flute, oboe, and clarinet solo bits would make perfect recording.

Any of Aubert's piquant overtures would record well; to name a few: *Zanetta*, *La Sirene*, *Le Lac des Fées*, *Haydée*, etc. Adolphe Adam, too, with *Giralda*, *Postillon de Lonjumeau*, *Brasseur de Preston*, etc. Last, but not least, the harmonious vases of Waldteufel and Gung'l; they are legion. Let them be recorded complete with their delightful symphonic introductions. Start with Gung'l's *Immortellen*, composed in honour of the great Strauss, *Soldaten Lieder*, *Casino Tänze*, all gems that will live. Some of the above have been arranged for military band, but let us have them as the composers did them for the string orchestra.

Yours sincerely,

St. Helier.

M. W. B.

HEBREW RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As a regular reader of THE GRAMOPHONE since its first number, will you permit me to draw the attention of your readers to some records which have recently come to my notice and which I consider are equal to if not better than the finest vocal records of modern times. I refer to the Hebrew records of Cantor Joseph Rosenblatt in the Victor catalogue. The subject of Hebrew records has been mentioned only once previously in your columns (Vol. II., No. 5, page 171), and the correspondent, "B. M. S." has opened up a field of vocal treasures about which, unfortunately, the non-Jewish lover of music is almost entirely ignorant. As a Jew I hope your readers will not think that I have a partiality for these records because of their religious significance, as there are quite a number of Hebrew-Jewish records in the English catalogues which scarcely attain the musical or intellectual value of such songs as *Yum tum tum* and *Do kippers swim folded or flat?*; but as a keen and unprejudiced collector of vocal masterpieces of all kinds and the possessor of records by Caruso, Martinelli, Anseau, Piccaver, Fleta, Chamlee, etc., nearly all acquired through the medium of your excellent journal, I can assert with conviction that such records as Victor 55164, 55195 (duet with Kaufman), and 55152, can rank with the greatest and are unique in the gramophone world. The recording is perfect, the light orchestral accompaniments are magnificent and for sheer vocal artistry surely Cantor Rosenblatt stands alone! The power, range, and flexibility of his voice is amazing, while his wonderful breathing capacity leaves one marvelling. He sounds in turn like Caruso and McCormack and occasionally displays a head register which resembles Heifetz's fiddling! Let any of your readers get No. 45204 and judge for themselves. In the original Hebrew the words alone reach the highest form of poetical writing, being extracts from the liturgy of the Jewish festivals and to me, therefore, their beauty is enhanced, but the interested listener can also thoroughly enjoy them in the same manner as he enjoys Chaliapin in Russian or Czecho-Slovakian. Should any of your readers, however, obtain these records (they can be had at the Gramophone Exchange to a firm order) and would like an English translation I shall gladly let them have one. There are a number of good records by Rosenblatt on Columbia E.1965 and E.5173 (duet with Malavsky) being especially fine, but the Victors are superior in every way.

To those of your readers who, like myself, collect vocal records only, may I mention a superb rendering of *Di quella pira* and *Ah, si ben mio*, sung by Sirota, "the Jewish Tamagno," for Imperial de Luxe. I consider this one of the best records in my modest collection, and should very much like to know your reviewer's opinion of it, also of those mentioned above. In conclusion, is it asking too much for you to spare a little corner in your valuable columns for an occasional review of those Hebrew and Jewish records already in existence and for those new ones which are issued from time to time by the various companies? I am sure there are a great many readers like myself who would greatly appreciate such a step.

Leeds.

Yours faithfully,

I. LANDY.

FILSON YOUNG.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—It is perhaps good for us to realise from time to time what we are up against, in the endeavour to improve the musical opinion and appreciation of others by means of the gramophone. In the issue of July, 1924 you had an article entitled "Mr. Filson Young when Younger." I regret to have to report that this worthy person is, so far as gramophones are concerned, a kind of Peter Pan; he apparently has a strong conscientious objection to growing up. In the October issue of "Apollo," in one of a series of quite interesting articles on "Music in a Life," he unloads himself of the following words: "... but that performance by its means can have any relation to the Art which I call music seems to me simply not true. No gramophone has ever, with my consent, been heard in any house of mine, except in the form of a child's toy—when I knew it would suffer the appointed fate of all children's toys—to be destroyed and resolved into its component parts, as soon as whatever pleasure or instruction it had to impart had been assimilated. The trouble is that grown-up people do not destroy their toys when they have served their useful purpose. They put them in niches and worship them and try to pretend that they are something quite other than toys."

Now, Peter Pans in fairy tales and fairy plays are very charming, but in real life they are usually a very grievous infliction on society

and it is truly amazing in these enlightened days, when the gramophone has, even allowing for its limitations, won its way into proper recognition by the greatest musicians of the day, to find one who has apparently been left behind in a medieval fog. Since the inception of THE GRAMOPHONE some of us perhaps had thought the battle for recognition was won; apparently it is not yet, there are still some outposts to be taken. One has the greater difficulty in appreciating Mr. Filson Young's antipathy to the gramophone, as he is apparently not one of those who object to *all* mechanical means of reproducing music; he can stand pianolas and wireless, but his withers get frightfully wrung by gramophones.

The views expressed may have been true twenty years ago, and are probably a correct expression of the opinions of many ignorant people to-day. From one who has some knowledge and love of music they are, I venture to submit, passing strange.

Yours faithfully,

St. Helens.

"SCRUTATOR."

A CORRECTION.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—"N. P.," who wrote the article on page 90 of your July, 1925, issue, may be pleased to learn that the song *And when I die*, etc., was not a by-product of the World War and cannot be blamed upon the British soldier. It was, in fact, a coon-song—so-called—that made its appearance in this country approximately twenty-five years ago, and was well known to the college student of the last generation. I am not exactly sure about the date of its origin, but remember well that my room-mate, 1904, sang it abominably and almost continuously and added to my misery by accompanying his pathetic wails with doleful chords done on a steel-stringed guitar. It was awful.

Yours, etc.,

Tulsa, U.S.A.

NUGENT DODDS.

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I put an advertisement in your paper (I nearly said "our" paper), and in one of our great Northern papers, and I only received replies from the advertisement in THE GRAMOPHONE. The moral is obvious. Best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

HARRY SMITH.

Hon. Secretary, Leeds Gramophone Society.

ELGAR'S FALSTAFF

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—May I express my complete agreement with your reviewer, "K. K.," when he writes that "There is no finer symphonic study in music literature" than Elgar's *Falstaff*, Op. 67, and further that "We ought to have the whole of the *Falstaff* work" on gramophone records. I have for long considered this to be the very finest of Elgar's orchestral music, better even than the *Symphony No. 2*, in *E flat*. I think that I said as much in my "Sir Edward Elgar," published some years ago (I have no copy by me at the moment), and my opinion is strengthened after every home reading of the wonderful score. Newman's excellent little book on Elgar does not reach the *Falstaff* owing to the early date of its publication. The Vocalion Gramophone Company are to be congratulated in issuing even a small part of the study, which is the most dangerous rival by an English composer to the tone-poems of R. Strauss. This may be the reason why it is never played in Germany! To use an expression favoured by many of your readers, I hope that "you will use your influence" to have Elgar's *Falstaff* recorded. Let every reader purchase the extract given on Vocalion K.05215. If Elgar were a German the work would have long since been published by the enterprising Parlophone and Polydor Companies.

London, S.E. 24.

JOHN F. PORTE.

Read FAIRY GOLD
IN THE
EVENING STANDARD

Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Owing to the increasing number of societies, it is unfortunately necessary to ration reporting secretaries down to 200 words a month. Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth of the month for inclusion in the next number. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

NOTES.

The Committee of the Dewsbury and District Gramophone Society suggests that THE GRAMOPHONE should find space for recommendations of works which it is especially desirable to urge upon the attention of the recording companies. The idea is that if gramophone societies would devote some energy to the compiling of such lists of *desiderata*, and if these lists were published in THE GRAMOPHONE and were endorsed by the approval of other societies, the cumulative demand would have some influence upon those who are anxious to know what the public wants.

Perhaps hon. secretaries would forward the views of their societies upon this project to the London Office?

* * *

The South African Gramophone Society has been started at Johannesburg with an initial response of at least sixty prospective members to the circular of the joint organising secretaries, Messrs. W. F. Lane and P. J. Wall (P.O. Box 5752, Johannesburg). There are no long winter evenings out there, and the distances (for our Capetown or East London readers, for instance) are rather disheartening. But all the societies in England will wish the South African Gramophone Society a prosperous career.

AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—February 9th. Sixteen members contributed one record each to what proved to be an extremely interesting and varied programme. By vote of those present Paderewski's *Minuet in G* (Kreisler), *Nocturno* from Borodine's *Quartet in D major* (Lener Quartet), and Mendelssohn's *On wings of Song* (Heifetz) were declared the three best items, a prize of a 6s. 6d. record being awarded to Mr. F. H. Lancum, the owner of the first-named record. The society acknowledges with many thanks receipt of a further batch of Vocalion records and a selection of seven records from the Parlophone Company. Of these particular attention must be drawn to the very fine Parlophone recording of Mozart's *Symphony in E flat* and Strauss's *Donaubweichen Waltz*, and to the Vocalion records of Stanford's *Songs of the Sea*, sung by Watcyn Watcyns, and York Bowen's rendering of Rachmaninoff's *Prelude in G minor*. Selections from the H.M.V. and Columbia new issues loaned by Messrs. Alfred Imhof, including the H.M.V. Albert Hall *Messiah* record and the new Columbia *Chopin Sonata* piano recording, were also played.

Next meeting March 9th. Lecture demonstration by Mr. Rink, of the Gramophone Company.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, *Hon. Secretary*.

BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On December 17th our popular committee member, Mr. Greenwood, gave a very excellent programme, and for this special occasion the meeting was open to the public. The first half was devoted entirely to the *Messiah*, and was very appropriate for the time of the year. The second half comprised *A Vucchella*, Caruso; *Should he upbraid*, Frieda Hempel; *Dio possente*, Stracciari; duet by Labbette and Eisdell, *The Flower*; also items by Galli-Curci, Alma Gluck, Evan Williams, Chaliapine, and the American Associated Glee Party.

On Wednesday, January 6th, at our headquarters, the members present were provided with another excellent night's entertainment by Mr. T. Lee, a new member who brought his own machine, a Columbia Grafonola. The programme was opened with *Overture "1812"* by the Grenadier Guards; *Like ships that pass*, Morlais Morgan; *Abide with me*, Edna Thornton; *La Traviata*, military band; *Maritana*, vocal gems; also items by Robert Howe, Harold Williams, Peter Dawson, Walter Passmore, also *Oberon Overture* by the Queen's Hall Orchestra, which came out splendidly. The secretary, Mrs. Leather, "Avonwold," Hemingway, S.S. Blackpool, will be pleased to furnish particulars of the society to any person interested in the gramophone.—WM. GRAINGER, *Recording Secretary*.

THE BLACKPOOL RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—On January 27th we had our usual fortnightly "members only" meeting, on which occasion we had a demonstration of the new issues (January) on Columbia, Brunswick, Vocalion, H.M.V., and Velvet Face. The outstanding items in a moderately decent "bunch" were: Col., *Vale*, Clara Butt; *Church bells of Novgorod*, Kedroff Quartet; and the extremely realistic *Martial Moments*, played by the Grenadier Guards. I don't know if this latter is a "skeleton" band, but there seems to be plenty of body in the reproduction, especially so as we heard it on the Super Apollo. Luella Paikin's voice is of delightful quality and with another two or three years' experience should rival the greatest. Her Mozart excerpt is to my mind one of the best things she has done. The *Wasps Overture* (which proved a far bigger "hit" with our members than the *Old King Cole* suite) and Roy Henderson's vocal jugglery (or should I say "jugular jugglery") are also remarkably good. The two quartet records of H.M.V., though "wide as hemispheres asunder," are very similar in some respects, and each in the very front rank in its own particular style. I refer, of course, to the records by the De Reszke Singers and by the Revellers.

On Tuesday, February 2nd, we had an extremely well attended "open meeting" at Feldman's Café. An audience of about three hundred were regaled with an "All star Celebrity Concert," arranged in conjunction with the "big three" of the gramophone trade in Blackpool—Messrs. Cooks, Messrs. Sharples, and Messrs. Francis Day and Hunters. With such artistes as Galli-Curci, Clara Butt, Madame D'Alvarez, Alma Gluck, Luella Paikin, Emmy Bettendorf, Elena Gerhardt, Allin, Rosing, Coates, Sammons, Caruso, Casals, Cortot, R.A.H. Orchestra, N.Q.H. Orchestra, and Berlin Opera House Orchestra, all appearing (with several others) it would be the task of an Ernest Newman, Francis Terry and Herman Klein combined into one to attempt to deal with this galaxy. I have a number of programmes left over, so if any reader is interested enough to send me a stamped addressed envelope I will forward a copy whilst they last.

Our first February "members only" meeting on the 10th was devoted to February new issues. Outstanding items were: *Chopin Sonata* (Col.), First Movement of Bach's *D minor Concerto*, *Canto popolare*, *Dear Love of Mine* (Voc.); *Rosamunde Ballet Music*, *Summer is gone*, and the really fine organ solo, *Largo* (all H.M.V.); *Sakuntala Overture*, *Madrigal*, *Nacht und Traum* (Parlo.), and *Träumerei* (Brunswick).—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

THE BRADFORD AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—A demonstration by Mr. Rowntree, of Messrs. Joshua Marshall and Co., Ltd., was held in the Church House on Wednesday, January 27th; under the auspices of the Bradford and District Gramophone and Phonograph Society. The instrument used was the new H.M.V., kindly loaned by Messrs. Marshall. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. Watson, the president of the society. The programme consisted of two parts, the first of which included many fine items of the classical standard. Such records as: Rossini's *Troncar suoi di quell'empio* (Martinelli, De Luca, Mardones); Gounod's *Prête moi ton Aide* (Enrico Caruso); Offenbach's *Elle a fui* (Frances Alda); Donizetti's *O Lisbona* (Apollo Granforte); and the instrumental quintet, *Piano Quintet in E flat major*, Op. 44, first movement (*Allegro Brillante*), by Schumann (Ossip Gabrilowitsch with Flonzaley Quartet), were greeted with great acclamation by the very splendid audience present, and Mr. Rowntree's masterly explanation of the various works was greatly appreciated. After the interval the lighter side of the programme was given and some very fine novelty records were demonstrated. *Dinah*, by the Revellers; *How's your folks and my folks down in Norfolk Town*, by the Happiness Boys; and the pianoforte solo, *Eskimo Shivers*, by Billy Mayerl, the pianist for the Savoy Orpheans, hugely delighted the company present. At the close of the recital the chairman, in giving a vote of thanks to Mr. Rowntree, alluded to the recent death of Mr. Edward Haley, and in expressing sympathy for his family on behalf of the gramophone society, said that in Mr. Haley the musical community of Bradford had lost a very good friend, and that his interest and help for the gramophone society had been such as could not easily be replaced. Coming events in connection with the society are the Vocalion demonstration to be held on February 24th, and the President's recital on March 24th next.—H. GOLDSMITH, *Hon. Secretary*, 18, Salt Street, Manningham, Bradford.

THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The officers elected on January 5th for the ensuing year were: A. Mackenzie, Esq. (who is very popular, and it is mainly due to his strenuous efforts that the above society has triumphed over its many vicissitudes during past years), president; Dr. Walmsley, vice-president; Mr. J. W. Borders, musical adviser; and Mr. J. T. Fisher, secretary and treasurer. These will form the executive and perform committee duties. The remainder of the evening was given up to a concert by Mr. W. Ling, which was of a general nature and was quite to the liking of the audience. Following this a short record competition was held, the prize being a copy of "Opera at Home" (H.M.V.), which was won by Mr. H. Cole. A contest for the best record will be held each month; the winner has the choice of the above book or a Columbia album for the prize. A copy of the society's prospectus will be forwarded to any who care to apply for same. Our programme for 1926 is of a very ambitious character. The monthly meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month and are "run" on the following lines. First hour is devoted to a programme by a member, then half-an-hour is given to a technical talk on some aspect of the gramophone by Mr. Webb; then comes the half-hour interval for refreshments and informal conversation, next a short musical address is given by Mr. Borders, the subject being a sort of preface to the member's programme of the next meeting; next follows the record competition, which is often the most interesting event of the evening.

All who are interested are invited to attend our next meeting or write to the secretary, Mr. FISHER, 28a, Fieldhouse Road, S.W. 12.

THE CANNOCK CHASE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A meeting and recital of records of the above society was held on January 11th, 1926, in the Link Room, Chads Moor. The programme consisted entirely of the Vocalion records for December and January, kindly sent as usual free to the society by this firm. They met with that sincere appreciation which they so much deserve. The charming voice of Luella Paikin was heard to great advantage on the cabinet H.M.V. gramophone kindly lent to the society by the secretary. She was compared favourably with Galli-Curci. The beautiful *Old King Cole Suite* and the *Wasps Overture* were excellent. Two competitions were also held. The first, a programme memory competition; second, a sound-box competition. Mr. Walker came out first in the former and second in the latter, Mr. Allmann coming out first in this. All present are looking forward to the next meeting, when a further competition is to be going on a needle test. This meeting will be held in the Link Room, Chads Moor.—S. E. WILLETS, *Recording Secretary*.

CANTERBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The meeting of the above society, held at Gaywood's Rooms on Wednesday, January 20th, took the form of a "Best Record" competition, on the same lines as have been so successful on previous occasions. A capital programme was made up, the following records winning the prize for their owners in each class: Vocal: (1) *Polonaise (Mignon)*, Evelyn Scotney (Vocalion) and *Lend me your aid*, John Perry (Parlophone); (2) *Toreador Song (Carmen)*, Peter Dawson (H.M.V.). Instrumental: (1) *La Traviata (Prelude)*, band (Columbia); (2) *Petite Suite de Concert (Demande et Reponse)*, De Groot (H.M.V.). (3) *Quintet in B minor (Brahms)*, (Columbia).

At the meeting held on February 3rd, at Gaywood's Rooms, the latest H.M.V., Parlophone, and Vocalion records were demonstrated. Both a H.M.V. and a Grafonola were available, so that members were able to hear the records on either machine if necessary. The opinion of the society was that the records were a much better selection of items than issued previously, the favourite apparently being the chorus and orchestral renderings of *Carmen* and *Faust* (H.M.V.). Luella Paikin's *Je veux vivre* (Vocalion), Phyllis Allan's *From the Rialto and Morning Song* (Vocalion), Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf's *Nacht und Traum* (Parlophone), and the Mozart *Symphony in E flat* (Parlophone) were enthusiastically received. The latter symphony appears to be one of the society's favourites. The *Confitebor tibi*, by the Sistine Vatican Choir, was adjudged an excellent recording, and an improvement on the previous records by this choir.—S. F. WADE, *Hon. Secretary*.

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The visit of Mr. Walter Yeomans on January 28th had been warmly anticipated, and it was gratifying to find that an audience of nearly 200 presented itself. The subject, "Bach and Handel," proved to be handled carefully and with originality. We were wisely spared a dry list of "principal dates"; the lecturer was more concerned

with the human side of the music of these mighty contemporaries, and one feels sure he succeeded in awakening a deeper interest in many unlikely quarters. Bach was dealt with first, and it was pleasing to find Mr. Yeomans tilting with the necessary weight of authority against the conventional fallacy that his music is dull and stodgy. Bach never was uninteresting, and many must have been surprised to find that he wrote such merry things as the *Third Brandenburg Concerto* (R.A.H. Orchestra) and the *Two Bourrées*, played by Harold Samuel.

One can hardly agree with Mr. Yeomans' granting the palm to Handel for musical "line drawing"; his counterpoint is certainly not so smooth or so resourceful as that of Bach. Handel did excell, though, in the handling of large choral masses, as we see in *Worthy is the Lamb*, the new H.M.V. version of which was played. His mode of living proves that he was undoubtedly a born "showman," but the amazing accident is that his music, although often written for immediate gain, has true artistic worth and still survives as the output of genius. Florence Austral's rendering of *From Mighty Kings* was only tolerably good, but Isolde Menges played two little dances with commendable charm. We thank Messrs. Thompson and Shackell for the gramophone.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The January meeting on the 14th took the form of three competitions: (1) for vocal duets, (2) for chamber music, and (3) stating the composers of the works entered in competition (2). The judging of the records was by vote of the members by the method of allotting to each one marks out of a possible ten. To judge a record fairly it is necessary to take into account composition, performance, recording, surface and quality of record material, to mention the main attributes, and there are also other points such as balance and suitability of performers to the composition to be considered; furthermore the relative importance of these qualities and in how far price is important must be decided so as to adjudge the record truly. The winning record in competition (1) was *Dite alla giovine* sung by Galli-Curci and De Luca, and for second place three records tied: *Der kleine Sandmann bin ich*, sung by Gluck and Homer; *O quanti occhi fidi*, sung by Alda and Martinelli; and *La ci darem*, sung by Garrison and Werrenrath. It is unlikely that anyone will quarrel with the result, as the winning record is about as perfect from every point of view as a record can be at present. In the second competition top marks were awarded to the *Presto* of Haydn's *Quartet in F major, Op. 3, No. 5*, played by the Lener Quartet, and second place was gained by the *Finale* of the same composer's *Quartet in D major, Op. 76, No. 5*, also played by the Lener, a tribute to the everlasting joy of Haydn's music and the excellence of the Lener Quartet records. The third competition proved to be difficult, and many members found it largely a matter of pure guesswork. It does not seem so very hard—until you try it. The society's library is growing, thanks to the Vocalion Co., and the January additions were eagerly sought by borrowers.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Reporting Secretary*.

THE EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—At the February meeting of the above society the programme was made up as follows. The first half was devoted to new issues, the following being well received: H.M.V., D.1052, *Rosamunde (Ballet Music in G)* (Schubert), by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. H.M.V., D.1057, *The Messiah*, by the Royal Choral Society (800 voices), accompanied by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. Columbia D.1533, *Arietta and Jig*, W. H. Squire ('cello). Columbia 3843, *Pagliacci (Prologue)*, Harold Williams (baritone), with orchestra. The second half consisted of a guessing competition; nine records were played and members had to guess the title, composer, and artist. There was much scratching of heads during the playing of the records. Ruby Helder singing *My dreams* and Gigli singing Toselli's *Second Serenade*, caused most members to guess wrongly. Mr. Ferrara was the winner with 12 points out of 27. The competition was much enjoyed and a repetition will be welcomed in the near future.—REG. PAINE, *Recording Secretary*.

EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The ninety-fifth monthly meeting of the above society was held on Saturday, January 16th, at headquarters, the Langthorne Restaurant, 15, Broadway, Stratford, and despite the wintry weather a good attendance was recorded. The attraction of the evening was the new "K.G.C." gramophone, the outcome of many years study by Mr. K. G. Clark, of 109, Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, and on a varied programme this machine fully justified the confidence placed in it by its creator. Mr. Leslie Clark ably assisted his

brother by giving descriptive notes of the various records played, and in the case of such works as Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* and Wagner's *Siegfried's Funeral March*, he played on the piano the various motifs which constantly appeared in the compositions, as a guide to the listeners. Apart from this demonstration the hon. secretary played many records from those issued during the current month, and mention must be made of the following: *One of the Guards*, sung by Malcolm McEachern; *The Wasps*, played by the Aeolian Orchestra; *Non so più*, sung by Luella Paikin, who is a pupil of Tetrazzini and deputised for her recently at the Albert Hall; and *Morning Song*, a violin solo played by Phyllis Allen and composed by the late Easthope Martin. These records are issued by the Vocalion Company. The H.M.V. and the Columbia issues afforded many interesting discussions as to the advantages or disadvantages of electrical recording, and the members were still of opinion, especially in the case of the orchestra, that this method of recording is at the moment far from being an improvement on the old style. Six new members were enrolled, and the hon. secretary will be glad to forward particulars of the society to prospective members.—W. J. WORLEY, *Hon. Secretary*.

HALIFAX AND DISTRICT RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—

The society now comprises about 125 members, which is considered very good, and shows the keenness which has been manifested in recorded music in what is admittedly a musical centre. The presidency has been accepted by Sir William Bulmer, and meetings are to be held at Craven Lodge secondary school. The second lecture-recital under the society's auspices was given on January 26th by Mr. H. Uttley, F.R.C.O., the subject being "The Development of Chamber Music," and this was both interesting and enlightening. Mr. Uttley at the outset traced the history of chamber or home music, and led up to the time of Bach and the development of the fugue and the dance suite. The growth of the sonata and symphonic form of music was also detailed. Records of music by Purcell, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, and Debussy, were played in illustration of points on a H.M.V. new model lent by Messrs. Priestley and Sutcliffe. On February 9th over two hours were spent in listening to members' favourite records, and these showed the musical calibre of the members. A Columbia machine was lent by Messrs. Albert Hind, Ltd. Some interesting evenings are in store.—J. S. WARING, 15, Willow Field Road, Halifax.

HUDDERSFIELD GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

The meeting of January 21st, held at our headquarters, Y.M.C.A., John William Street, Huddersfield, was a welcome change from the previous programmes. We had the complete set of the H.M.V. records of *Iolanthe* provided by our member, Mr. G. A. Sykes, which was a great success. The remainder of the meeting was taken up by the demonstration of Vocalion records kindly sent to us each month. The outstanding records were *The Wasps Overture* (Vaughan Williams), the Aeolian Orchestra; *One of the Guards*, Malcolm McEachern (bass); *Concerto in D minor* (Bach, for two violins and orchestra) Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi; *Prelude in G minor*, Op. 23 and *Second Arabesque in G*, York Bowen (piano-forte). *Songs of the Sea* (C. V. Stanford), Watcyn Watcyns (bass baritone); *Canto popolare* from overture *In the South* (Elgar), Modern Chamber Orchestra. We are greatly indebted to the Vocalion Company for sending us such fine example of their products. After the demonstration of these records they were passed over to our circulating library.—H. A. SHAW, *Hon. Secretary*.

CITY OF LEEDS GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—

At our meeting on January 19th, held in the Y.M.C.A. rooms, Albion Place, Leeds, we had a "Parlophone Night." The records were supplied by the Parlophone Company and the gramophone used was the large one owned by the society. The programme consisted of the following: Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, Sistine-Vatican Choir, Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf, Marek Weber and his Orchestra, Irmier Ladies' Choir, and Mozart's *Symphony in E flat*. Appreciation of the records was expressed by the members. Mozart's symphony came in for special comments. The quality of the records was all that could be desired. The Lifebelt was used for several items, and it was the unanimous opinion that its use was an improvement. A most enthusiastic, though small, audience spent a most enjoyable evening. At our next meeting on February 16th we propose to have a "Vocalion Night."—H. S.

THE LEICESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The "Vocalion Evening" on January 11th proved a very successful event, and the records which had been selected by the Vocalion Company,

made a very interesting programme. The popularity of Malcolm McEachern was evident by the manner in which his records were received, and his *Sperate o figli* (Verdi) should be in every collection. In lighter vein his singing of *One of the Guards* and *Come to the cook-house door* was equally enjoyable. Luella Paikin scored a distinct success in the Waltz Song from *Roméo et Juliette*, and other records deserving of special mention are: *Miserere* (*Il Trovatore*), Raisa, Tokatyan, and chorus; *Hungarian Dance No. 6* (Brahms), Sapellnikoff; *The Erl King* (Schubert) and *Serenade* (Schubert), Roy Henderson; *The Golden Sonata*, Op. 16, No. 31 (Purcell), Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi; *Fingal's Cave Overture* and *The Ride of the Valkyries*, H.M. Life Guards. Thanks were expressed to the Vocalion Company for their generosity in presenting the records, which have been added to the library. Five new members joined, which was a very satisfactory conclusion to an enjoyable evening.—W. H. ABELL, *Hon. Secretary*, 87, Nansen Road, Leicester.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

The two January meetings were both of exceptional interest. At the first, held on Monday 11th, the society had—for the fourth year in succession—the pleasure of listening to a demonstration of the Lenthall gramophone, conducted by Mr. C. Bertram Lenthall in person. A very happily chosen programme was presented and the reproduction obtained was, as usual, very natural, of a pleasing quality, and ample in volume. Several selections made a distinct impression. The Lenthall instrument is a particularly good medium for instrumental records. It was not surprising therefore that the records by Catterall and Murdoch (*Spring Sonata*), Cortot (*Impromptu in F sharp Major*—Chopin), Suggia, (*Allemande*—Scaillé), and Lener Quartet (*Andante Cantabile*, *Quartet in F major*—Haydn), should make a ready appeal by reason of the rich, natural tone of the reproduction. The new record of the *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (Saint-Saëns), by Chemet, proved to be an example of brilliant playing and excellent recording, and was warmly applauded. Mr. Lenthall made a passing reference to the current slogan, "listen to the bass," and as an example of the possibilities of the Lenthall gramophone in this direction a record by McEachern of *The Mighty Deep* was included. So far at least as vocal bass tones are concerned the Lenthall shows a fullness and sonority rarely achieved.

The growth of the society movement during late years has been quite remarkable, but, outside the metropolis, where, of course, facilities are not wanting, there still appears to be a plentiful lack of co-operation and friendly intercourse. Two of the older provincial societies, at least, have definitely decided to change this apathetic attitude and the Manchester and Liverpool groups—both constituted about the same time some 13 years ago—held the first of a proposed series of inter-society gatherings on Monday, January 25th, at the Liverpool headquarters. The success of the scheme seems already assured. At the meeting under review Mr. C. J. Brennan (hon. secretary and treasurer) and Mr. F. J. Puxty, of the Manchester Society, presented a wholly admirable programme. Mr. Brennan was responsible for the first part and confined his attention to a selection of Polydor records. He said that he felt great pleasure at the outcome of the effort to secure closer friendly relationship between the two societies and expressed the hope that the bond might be developed and strengthened in the future. The records he submitted were all of a high class, and his analysis of the Polydor catalogue—as discriminating as it was profound—was exceedingly helpful. The items were, for the most part, in the vocal class and the writer was particularly impressed with the following: *Schusterlied* (*Meistersinger*), Fr. Schorr; *Am stillen Herd* (*Meistersinger*), Robert Hutt; *Pagen Arie* (*Huguenots*), Maria Ivogün; and the *Brindisi* (*Hamlet*), Heinrich Schlusnus.

After the interval Mr. Puxty offered a miscellaneous programme, chosen with evident care and taste and nicely balanced. His remarks stamped him at once as a well-informed student of the activities of the gramophone societies. Some of the records of which special mention may be made are the following. *Sea Shanties*, sung by John Goss and quartet; viola, *Come sweet death* (Bach), Tertis; *Aloha Oe*, by Alma Gluck and male quartette, and the Negro Spirituals of Paul Robeson and Lawrence Brown and of the Fisk University Jubilee Quartet. The very happy tone which pervaded the proceedings and the winning personality of the visitors served to set the seal of success on the initial meeting and another happy foregathering is looked for on March 8th, when a contingent from the Liverpool Society will visit Manchester and endeavour to submit a typical Liverpool programme.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The January meeting was devoted to a comprehensive demonstration of Polydor records by our hon. secretary, Mr. C. J. Brennan, to whom the society owes so much in so many ways. A carefully chosen programme with most interesting notes on the various artistes and records gave considerable pleasure, and was of particular interest in view of the somewhat varying opinions expressed at different times in THE GRAMOPHONE and elsewhere on the qualities of Polydor records. To the keen gramophonist these open up a new field of first-class recordings of many works and items not available in the home companies' catalogues. The records had the advantage of being played on a large model of the new H.M.V. instrument, and loud and medium steel needles were used on this occasion, as most suitable in our large room. The records which made the greatest impression were *Flüdermonolog*, better known to us as *The scent of the Elder*, from *Die Meistersinger*, sung by Alfred Jerger in a splendid open bass voice. Alfred Piccaver in *Am stillen Herd*, also from *Die Meistersinger*, and Robert Hutt in *Attest du Nicht* from *Lohengrin* proved themselves the equals of any living operatic tenors on records, the latter being particularly fine. Delia Reinhardt and Grete Stückgold have sweet soprano voices, the records given being *Leise, leise* from *Der Freischütz* and *Ave Maria*, from Verdi's *Othello* respectively. Of baritones, Heinrich Schlusnus took first place in the *Brindisi* from Thomas's *Hamlet* and Friedrich Schorr in *Schusterlied*, the cobbling song from the *Meistersinger*, made an excellent record. Mr. Brennan told us that after hearing some 400 Polydor records he felt that he could recommend almost any record by the above-named artistes as well as any of those by Sigrid Onegin (contralto), Maria Ivogün (soprano), whose *Pagen-Arie* from Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* was probably the most beautiful record of the evening, Hélène Wildbrunn (soprano), Michael Bohnen and Paul Bender (basses), and Joseph Schwarz, H. Rehkemper, and T. Lattermann (baritones). Vasa Prihoda (violinist) can hold his own with all comers as regards execution, but although his playing in the first part of Bach's *Chaconne* was of a beautiful round tone, certain members seemed to think it lacked something of fire. The orchestral records were pleasantly played and well recorded, the only one calling for special comment being of the overture to Weber's *Peter Schmoll*, by the Harmonie Orchester. A specially good duet with splendid balance between the voices was that of Selma Kurz and H. Schlusnus from *Magic Flute*. To sum up, the records as presented are equal in practically all respects (including surface noise!) to makes with which we are more familiar and give opportunity of extension to collectors who are not satisfied with the range offered by the home companies. The evening concluded with a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Brennan for the infinite pains taken to present the cream of the catalogue to us and for his endeavour to provide not so much a popular entertainment as a guide to those to whom the Polydor catalogue is as yet an undiscovered country. In the vote of thanks was included the name of Messrs. Hime and Addison for their kind loan of the instrument used, and also that of our good friends the *Manchester City News* for so kindly giving regular and special notices of our meetings, etc., in their columns.—F. J. P.

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The February meeting consisted of a lecture-recital by Mr. Moses Baritz, on "The Development of Religion in Negro Music." Commencing by showing the great influence of music on religion in general, the lecturer went on to illustrate its influence more particularly in the Roman Catholic Church and its increasing fervour of expression as shown in the Jewish religion and further still in the Salvation Army and amongst the negroes. He exemplified, through an interesting set of Columbia records by Edna Thomas, the aspirations of the negroes to eventual economic emancipation through divine aid as shown in the spirituals—*Swanee River*, *Old Virginny*, and *My old Kentucky home*. Their simple primitive reverence for Bible truths in *Go down Moses*, *Swing low, sweet Chariot*, and *Were you there*, illustrating the Exodus, the ascent of Elijah, and a beautiful, if primitive description of the Crucifixion, and also their simple-minded and childlike ideas as expressed in *I got shoes*, *Tone de bell*, *Rock o' my soul*, and *A little wheel a-turning in my heart*. Mr. Baritz emphasised that negro worship is expressed in the mass rather than individually, accounting for its somewhat noisy demonstrativeness, and that their faith is perfectly sincere. His lecture was, as usual, most interesting and graphically informative, the more so as it was based upon personal knowledge of the negro and his ways acquired during several years' residence and extensive travelling in the States, and the warmest thanks of the audience were conveyed to him at the close.—C. J. BRENNAN, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

NELSON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE MUSIC SOCIETY.

The members of the above society enjoyed on January 20th a talk by Mr. H. Fothergill on "Schubert—The Master of Song," which he illustrated by a selection of records. Mr. Sugden was the chairman. The lecturer spoke of Schubert as one of the most lovable of composers, not only by reason of his cheerfulness in his life-long struggle with poverty, but also for his freedom from the mannerisms and eccentricities which so often beset genius. Yet his genius was unquestionable, as evinced by the spontaneity, tunefulness, and expressiveness of his works, as well as by their amazing number and the speed and fertility of his invention. After playing over some of Schubert's instrumental works, Mr. Fothergill gave a brief sketch of the history of song and passed on to the songs of the master under discussion. These he characterised as melodious, complete, a perfect expression of the idea in the poem, and with an accompaniment suggesting and intensifying the mood or picture expressed. Some of the songs with which he illustrated these points were the majestic *To Music*, *Who is Sylvia?* and the dramatic *Erl King*. The orchestral works played included the first movement of the *Unfinished Symphony* and the overture to *Rosamunde*, while the *Ave Maria* (for violin) and one of the *Moments Musicaux* (for piano) were also heard. The gramophone used had been made by one of the members, Mr. P. Wilmore.

The meeting which was held on February 2nd was addressed by Mr. T. E. Barker, whose subject was "The Appreciation of Music." Mr. F. Greenwood, the chairman, gave a brief account of appreciation lessons to school children, and Mr. Barker, after speaking of inevitable differences of taste, went on to illustrate his own taste by records which he had divided into four sections: orchestral and instrumental, songs and ballads, religious music, and opera. His remarks upon the records played were very interesting; in connection with the *Peer Gynt Suite*, for example, he drew attention to the various moods there expressed in music. Another "mood-painting" he gave was the incidental music to *Mary Rose*, to which an additional and different interest is given by the composer's use of voices as part of the orchestra. Of solo instruments he chose Heifetz's playing of a minuet and J. H. Squire in two flowing melodies. Unfortunately space does not permit of the inclusion of the rest of his programme; it must suffice to mention Sir Landon Ronald's *Down here*, two negro spirituals, part of Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and *God is a Spirit* and *Worthy is the Lamb*. In his selections from operatic music he had been guided by the intrinsic value of the music, not merely by a beautiful voice beautifully used. The pieces here were the *Prologue* and *On with the Molley* from *I Pagliacci*, and Galli-Curci singing *Ah, non credea*. All the records were played on a new model H.M.V. gramophone, kindly lent by Mr. T. Croasdale.

The record library is of great use to the members, and we thank the Parlophone Company for further gifts. Enquiries and communications should be addressed to the secretary, Mr. H. C. Wood, 18, Malvern Road, Nelson.—MARGARET E. WADDINGTON, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.

Mr. E. H. Thomas's programme of Columbia records, at our meeting of Saturday, February 13th, was a very varied and comprehensive assortment of good class music, both old and new. Of twenty-six records prominence may be given to the very fine new recordings of choral music exemplified by *Hunting Song* (*Robin Hood*), de Koven, and *The Sword of Ferrara* (McLennan), sung by the Associated Glee Clubs of U.S.A. But the Sheffield Choir was easily equal to the "hands across the sea," in Handel's *Worthy is the Lamb* and *Hallelujah Chorus*, from the *Messiah*. Everyone assented on the improvement in choral recording. Another real gem was Titl's *Serenade* for flute and alto horn, the performers thereon being strangely not mentioned. *Flower Song* (*Carmen*) and *Celeste Aida*, by John McCormack is an old and ever welcome favourite. Two good records by Norman Allin—*The Midnight Review* and *Blow! Blow! thou winter wind*—were eminently characteristic of that deservedly popular basso; and Elsa Stralia, in *Love sends a little gift of Roses*, and *West of the Great Divide*, was clear and full toned. Mr. Thomas had a great reception for his carefully chosen records and received a hearty vote of thanks. As an interlude a number of records from the current Vocalion list, presented to the society by the Vocalion Co., were played to the evident satisfaction of all. The Bach *Concerto in D minor* (violins), A. Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi being an especially fine piece of recording, as were also *Drake's Drum* (Stanford), Watcyn Watcyns; *Prelude in G minor* (Rachmaninoff), York Bowen (piano); and *Dear love of Mine*, Destournel and Williamson (duet). Mr. Ivory also gave us a taste of the new H.M.V. recording of grand organ

music in Handel's *Largo* and *Lost Chord*. Altogether a successful evening. Next meeting March 13th. Messrs. Booth and Wilkinson. Communications : Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N. 4.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the unanimous request of the members the highly successful programme of "Songs from Shakespeare" was continued on February 14th, the first item being the group of records of *Who is Sylvia?* The Parlophone version made a great impression both from a recording and musical standpoint. Presumably Schubert composed the music to the German words. We were also happy in having available some quite new recordings of *Sigh no more, ladies* and *It was a lover and his lass* for comparison with older editions, the one of outstanding interest being John Coates (Vocalion).

The second half of the programme was devoted to recent issues. Finally by way of contrast we had the excitement of comparing Paderewski's unique record of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, with the full orchestra Parlophone version. Members are still arguing the point.—E. G. LAMBLE, 51, Balmoral Road, London, N.W. 2.

PRESTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—There was a capital attendance at our meeting on Tuesday, January 19th, for a selected concert and lecture, the lecturer being Mr. Vernon White, of Smith and Co., Ltd., Itonia House, London, who chose as his subject the "Process of Recording."

Mr. White opened his remarks with the evolution of music from the savages and traced briefly the history of the gramophone from its inception. Concise descriptions of the various different types as cylindrical and disc records were given and technicalities regarding cuts, lateral hill and dale, etc., were clearly explained. Materials in manufacture and the difference between the solid and laminated types were stressed. The various processes which are entailed by the production of a record were explained and an insight was given into the mysteries of the production of the gramophone and its components. At the close of the lecture Mr. White congratulated the Preston Society on the enthusiasm displayed and remarked that the advancement in the production of good music was largely due to the demands which the various societies made. It enabled gramophone companies of the country to turn out music of the first order. A hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. White for his able lecture, also to Messrs. R. and J. H. Bromley and Co., of Itonia House, Preston, who provided the musical portion. The meeting was a great success; twelve new members were enrolled.—W. WEAL, *Hon. Secretary*, 250, Lancaster Road, Preston.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The scientific and musical study of new devices calculated to improve sound-reproducing apparatus are one of the many important objects of the above society. The members on the 18th were invited to listen to the Apollo gramophone, the feature of which is a five-foot sound resonator cast in solid aluminium ingeniously fitted inside the cabinet, allowing adequate space for record storage. A tone-arm of the goose-neck type designed to give accurate track alignment, is also embodied therein. The machine gives a very wide range of amplification, and the tonal quality is very good. The first part of the programme was devoted to Parlophone records, which included *O Katharina* and *Nachfalter Valse*, rendered by Marek Weber and his Orchestra. *Recondita armonia* from *La Tosca* sung by Costa Milona. *Un bel dì*, Mme. Zita Fumagalli, expressively rendered and well recorded; and *Credo (Missa de Angeles)*, sung by members of the Westminster Cathedral Choir. A selection of Vocalion records were demonstrated during the remainder of the evening. Recordings by Luella Paikin and Evelyn Scotney—*Je veux vivre* from *Romeo and Juliet* and *Lo! here the gentle lark* (Bishop), respectively—were of exquisite quality and artistic brilliance. *Frühlingsnacht*, by the eminent pianist Sapellnikoff; *Linden Lea*, (Vaughan-Williams), sung by Mr. John Coates, the tenor; *Love the Pedler* (German), Miss Kathleen Destournel, were delightful items. The evening concluded with a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Craies, who so ably demonstrated the Apollo machine.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—At the last meeting held on January 11th at the Clock Tower Chambers, High Street, Lewisham, our Mr. Martin Kingslake (organist of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street) gave us not only a very interesting but an exceedingly attractive lecture on "Johannes Brahms." We must congratulate Mr. Kingslake on the loving care and thoughtful planning he brought to the preparation of his lecture and point out, if we may, how much its value

was enhanced for us by the modest sincerity with which he approached his subject. We are greatly indebted to him.

Mr. Kingslake told us of Brahms' early childhood, the drudgery and wonderful success of the early days, and of his early love of folk-songs fostered by his association with a choral society. Of the happy days spent as conductor of the ladies' choir when he was first prompted to write part-songs for female voices, and of his partnership with the famous Hungarian violinist, from whom he probably learned the Hungarian melodies which were later to bring him so much affection. We learned of the great part such eminent folk as Joachim, Liszt, and the Schumanns were to play in this eventful young life, and how he mortally offended the great Liszt. Was the world plunged in gloom for Johannes we wonder, or did his ill-luck pass him lightly by? The sad history of the *Requiem*, too, was duly unfolded to us, but the many jolly anecdotes were not omitted either. Mr. Kingslake stressed the fact that Brahms' position cannot be disputed for the outstanding qualities in the technique of Bach and Beethoven met and were blended in him. The lecture was most happily punctuated at opportune times by illustrations from the following works: *Third Violin Sonata*, Op. 108 (Col. L.1537); *Vergebliches Ständchen*, Op. 84 (Voc. B.3115); *First Symphony*, Op. 68 (Col. L.1598); *Viola Sonata*, Op. 120 (Voc. K.05117); *Capriccio in C sharp minor*, Op. 76 (Col. L.1124); *Students' Festival Overture*, Op. 80 (Col. L.1637); *String Quartet in A minor*, Op. 51 (Col. L.1520); *Sapphic Ode*, Op. 94 (Voc. A.0220); *Second Symphony*, Op. 73 (H.M.V., D.873); *Clarinet Quintet in B minor*, Op. 115 (Col. L.1219); and the Hungarian dances. According to the voting of the members the *Clarinet Quintet* and *Second Symphony* were declared the best of the records and in this order. The last half hour was devoted to a recital composed of records made by Jan Kubelik. For information please write the Secretary, 34, Chalsey Road, S.E. 4.—FLORENCE GAMON, *Recording Secretary*.

The second of our special meetings—which were inaugurated so that members might hear early in each month anything in the new lists that appealed to them—was unfortunately very sparsely attended. The reason for this is not clear, seeing that nearly every member expressed a wish for these meetings to be held. However, the handful present had, I am sure, a most enjoyable time with Vocalion, Parlophone, Columbia, and H.M.V. records. An interesting feature was a comparison between the pianoforte recordings: *Prelude in G minor*, Op. 23 (Rachmaninoff) (Voc. K.05214); *Cubana* (M. de Falla) (Col. L.1707); *Prelude and Allemande in B flat* (Bach) (H.M.V., D.1053). Opinion was unanimous as to the superiority of the latter, but it was considered that, for an old style recording, the Vocalion was a very commendable achievement. The Parlo. *Bonum est* (Palestrina) evoked little enthusiasm, it being generally considered as not up to previous standards set by the Sistine Choir, but Emmy Bettendorf's beautiful singing of the lovely *Wiegentied, Schläfe, Schläfe* well merited the applause freely bestowed. I must not omit to mention Phyllis Archibald (*Trees*) (Voc. X.9709) and Harold Williams (*Pagliacci Prologue*) (Col. 3843), which were other outstanding vocal records. The March special will be held on March 2nd, at Clock Tower Chambers, 73, High Street, Lewisham; this will be followed by our regular meeting on March 8th, which will be in the hands of Mr. Lewis, with the subject "Some Operatic Comparisons." Communications from intending visitors should be sent to 34, Chalsey Road, Brockley, S.E. 4.—E.B.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—It seems somewhat late in the day to consider how the musical tastes of the people at large have been and are being stimulated by mechanical means typified by the gramophone and wireless, but that such is the case should be evident by the fact of the existence of such a number of gramophone societies as are to be found throughout these islands, and by the odd million of license-holders—and also listeners-in—that testify to the popularity of the allied art of broadcasting. So, from music being the prerogative of the few, it has become the recreation of the multitude, and thus an infinite power for good. These thoughts are naturally engendered when casting one's mind back over the proceedings of the past year, as exemplified by the works of this society, the annual general meeting of which took place on January 30th. It is perhaps fortunate that these annual occurrences take place, as it gives members a chance to air their feelings and desires—and sometimes their grievances—but happily in the present instance these were not present and the presence of unity was typified by the re-election of all the officers, with the one exception of Mr. Roekaerts, the hon. treasurer, who relinquished this office, and which in future will be merged in that of the hon. secretary.

The position of the society continues to be sound both numerically and financially, and the general tone of the programmes has remained consistently high. In the coming season it is proposed to devote more time to matters of a technical nature, and at alternative meetings this subject will occupy one-third of the main programme and, at certain other meetings, there will be a dual programme only, instead of the usual triple one, and each section will take on a more specialised nature than hitherto, especially where it is proposed to devote the interest to one subject or composer. The business part of the meeting was followed by a joint programme by Miss M. Allen and Mr. H. F. V. Little, devoted to Verdi.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

SUTTON GRAMOPHONE AND RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY (Surrey).—It was recently decided to form a gramophone society in connection with the Sutton Adult School, and the first meeting was held on Friday, February 5th, at 8 p.m., in the music room of the Adult School buildings. Mr. A. M. Rosenberg, who presided over a gathering of 30 persons, outlined the aims of the society, the principal of which are: "To foster and develop a love of good music; to give public recitals of symphonies, concertos, or suites of chamber music available in recorded form." Mr. Dewey, the premier dealer, locally, is interested in the society, and very kindly lent a cabinet model new H.M.V. instrument for the occasion, this being much appreciated by the members. The first record to be played was a Parlophone one, *Liebeslieder* and *Donauweibchen*, recorded by the Marek Weber Orchestra, this item being received in a very cold manner, though this was due not to lack of appreciation so much as to the peculiar atmosphere created by the bringing together of so many people, all strangers to each other. The demonstrator suggested that some of the character of the concert hall might be pleasantly introduced if members would show their appreciation of those items which pleased them, by applauding in the usual manner. Thereafter everybody entered into the spirit of the meeting and proceeded thoroughly to enjoy themselves. Many Parlophone records were given and these formed an introduction to most of those present of the recordings of this company, these records having previously been unobtainable in Sutton, and were consequently quite new to us. The Edith Lorand Orchestra received a tremendous ovation for their splendid work in the *Potpourri from the Merry Widow*, a very good disc of a light character. Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf also deserves mention for the very sympathetic singing of *Nacht und Traume* and *Wiegenlied, Schläfe, Schläfe* (Schubert). Several other records from this company were demonstrated, all being exceptionally good value for money, an important item to-day, all the symphonies etc., being sold at 4s. 6d. a record. The *Grail Scene* from *Parsifal* (H.M.V.) was acclaimed as the best of the evening, though the new recording was criticised, it being felt that, though it marks an advance, as it stands, it is at times disagreeable. It is hoped that the recording companies will assist us in our purpose, the awakening of a new interest in the best music. Future meetings will be held fortnightly and all local enthusiasts are welcomed. For further particulars write Alfred M. Rosenberg, 85, Warwick Road, Sutton, Surrey.—A. M. ROSENBERG.

TYNESIDE GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Headquarters: Church Institute, Hood Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Secretary: W. L. Murray Brooks, 70, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Subscription, 5s. per annum. Meetings: second and fourth Tuesdays in each month, at 7.30 o'clock. Visitors cordially invited. The attendances since the New Year have kept up remarkably well, the average per meeting being higher than in any previous season. On January 28th Messrs. Waddingtons gave a most successful demonstration of the Vocarola machine, which pleased the audience exceedingly with its very full, open tone. The programme was of "popular price" records, chosen from the Vocalion and Aco catalogues, and was of a high standard. Maurice Cole's half-crown pianoforte recordings were a revelation to those conservative members who usually see little good in anything below "red label" price, and Messrs. Waddingtons not only sold these records in the room, but had many repeat orders, thus emphasising this paper's oft-repeated contention that there is a large and growing demand for good music, well recorded, at popular prices.

The Gilbert and Sullivan night on February 11th, was also a great success, selections from no fewer than nine of the operas being given. The lending library is immensely popular, having "caught on" at once. The secretary extends his most cordial thanks to the Vocalion and Parlophone companies, whose monthly donations of records have enabled him both to establish and maintain this library. The "rush" for records at the close of each meeting

continues unabating, and, furthermore, the secretary is assured that the quality of the music available and the reasonable prices at which it may be purchased, is amply reflected at the local dealers who stock these two makes.

* * *

Gerhardt and Lener.

A great many people will think that the series of recitals given by Madame Gerhardt and the Léner String Quartet is perhaps the most attractive of the International Celebrity Subscription Concerts. In March they will appear at Belfast on the 1st, at Dundee on the 4th, at Edinburgh on the 6th, at Glasgow on the 8th, at Bradford on the 9th, at Newcastle on the 10th, at Manchester on the 13th, at Bristol on the 18th, and at Manchester again on the 20th. Madame Gerhardt will also sing in London at the Queen's Hall on the 16th and the Albert Hall on the 28th; and the Léner Quartet will go to Cambridge on the 11th and Oxford on the 17th and will find time for an afternoon recital at Cheltenham on the 18th on the way to Bristol. Judging by the crowded audiences which we have seen at their February recitals in London, we predict a triumphant tour for them; and they will owe not less than half their popularity to their gramophone records of lieder-singing and of chamber music in perfection.

Spencer Dyke Quartet Recitals

The programmes of the two recitals given at the Wigmore Hall on February 8th and 22nd by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet contained two works already recorded for the N.G.S. by the same players, the Beethoven *Quartet in F major* (the first Rasumovsky) and the Brahms *Sextet in B flat major* (Op. 18). These are precisely the two works of which we still have a few sets left, and they will be supplied to members only at the original price of 25s. for each work until the stock is exhausted. A violin and pianoforte recital by Spencer Dyke and Harold Craxton is announced for May 20th, at 8.15 p.m. It is to be sincerely hoped that they will receive better support from the London public than Albert Sammons and William Murdoch did recently in their series of Sonata Recitals on Saturday afternoons. The attendance was deplorable.

The Siftron

A new product of the Amplion people, Messrs. Alfred Graham and Co., Ltd., has been submitted to us for test. No doubt most of our readers are more familiar with the Algraphone, the gramophone which emanates from the same company, but for the benefit of those who also take a keen interest in wireless we would draw their attention to the small device marketed under the name of the "Siftron."

This consists of an oblong case about 4in. by 3in. by 2in., of black moulded insulation material fitted with a pair of nickelled terminals at each end, containing in this compact form a filter circuit for use between the output of the wireless valve set and the loud speaker or 'phones.

The object of the appliance is to separate the constant steady high voltage current in the anode circuit of the last valve from the fluctuating current which gives the audible results from the loud speaker.

This steady current normally flows through the fine wire windings of the speaker which is thus more liable to break down and only the variations above and below this mean potential difference are actually required to operate the diaphragm and produce sound.

The method used is to shunt the output terminals of the set with an iron-cored choke coil which permits free passage of the anode-potential so far as the steady current is concerned and offers a high impedance to the varying pulsations imposed on this mean value, while a condenser of high capacity is inserted in one lead to the loud speaker to pass the speech or music frequencies, the other lead being taken from the opposite end of the choke coil. Thus it is a most ingenious idea and while not new in itself it is, we believe, the only completely self-contained unit available for the purpose. It is only necessary to insert the leads in the spring terminals provided to rest assured that everything possible has been done to obviate risk of the loud speaker suffering from premature breakdown.

The results from a musical point of view leave nothing to be desired while there is no apparent diminution of volume.

The older method of inserting a "transformer" for the purpose is open to the objection that it, in all probability, introduces a slight element of distortion which does not apply to a properly designed filter circuit such as this.

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CHAMBER MUSIC

H.M.V.—D.1058-1061 (four 12in. records, 6s. 6d. each).—**The Virtuoso String Quartet: Quartet in G minor** (Debussy). Durand min. score. And **Scherzo from Quartet in E flat, Op. 44, No. 3** (Mendelssohn).

Debussy's *G minor Quartet* was written in 1893, a year after *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* and at a time when the young composer had not yet entirely broken with the past. But while the work shows, as is natural, the influence of accepted models, it is nevertheless so full of anticipations of his mature style that we may almost regard it as typical Debussy. Problems of design are dealt with on original but successful lines, but it is not its structure that has made the quartet so deservedly popular, and I shall refrain from analysis. Its outstanding qualities are rather the gossamer texture, the elusive atmosphere so characteristic of Debussy's later manner, and that extraordinary *flair* for effective and novel ways of using and combining the instruments which is the distinguishing mark of modern French composers.

As readers of THE GRAMOPHONE are aware, the work has already been recorded by the Spencer Dyke Quartet for the N.G.S., but this is the first time that it has been offered to the general public, and H.M.V. are to be congratulated on their enterprise in issuing it complete. The Virtuoso Quartet gives us a vigorous and carefully rehearsed rendering that makes up in sincerity for an occasional lack of sparkle; the company have spared no pains in their efforts to secure a good set of records, and the result is a performance that can safely be recommended to the chamber music enthusiast.

The *Scherzo* goes best and is a sheer joy to listen to, but the slow movement is hardly inferior, and the other records are only less good than these two. I lost sight of the 'cello once or twice in the first movement (notably at the top of page 14), but as a rule the balance is excellent and the parts come out clearly. I see that some reviewers have found fault with the chamber music recorded by the new process, the chief complaints being excessive loudness and the bad quality of the tone. They are right, I think, in deprecating the passion for mere volume that seems to possess some of the companies, though this nuisance can be mitigated by the use of a soft needle; but I cannot agree with their other strictures. If the tone now produced is often too brazen it is surely no further from the actual sound of the strings than the fluty pipings of the old method. Nobody imagines that we have yet reached perfection in this matter, but I am convinced that the gain in clearness and good balance far more than compensates for any slight falling-off, if such there be, in the fidelity with which the *timbre* of the individual instruments is reproduced.

Three movements of the quartet take up two sides each. The breaks occur as follows: Page 8, end of bar 3; page 29, bar 4; and page 39, line 3, bar 6.

A delightful Mendelssohn *Scherzo* occupies the odd side. I confess I am unfamiliar with the music, but a first hearing gave me the impression that it was distinctly interesting and that performance and reproduction left little to be desired save in the small matter of the final low notes. I should add that my reviews this month are based on listening to the records on one of the new H.M.V. instruments (a table grand), a No. 4 sound-box, and various needles; lack of time renders much experimenting impossible.

COLUMBIA.—L.1716 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**The London String Quartet: An Irish Melody (The Londonderry Air)**, arranged by Frank Bridge.

Great as my respect is for Frank Bridge, I cannot find it in me to admire his setting of the *Londonderry Air*. He shows, as usual, an extraordinary insight into the possibilities of the instruments comprising the string quartet and writes very effectively for them; but the piece, which is not a new one, belongs to the period when it was fashionable to take old tunes and dress them up in modern chromatic harmonies. Such attempts to put old wine into new wine-skins are seldom or never successful, and they have been superseded in the last few years by a much more respectful treatment of the old melodies. H.M.V. recorded the work a considerable time ago, but their version has recently been withdrawn and this Columbia version now stands alone as far as I know. Those who disliked the reproduction of the *Three Idylls* issued by the same company last month will probably dislike this record too; as I have said in my review of the Debussy I do not entirely share their opinion.

PETER LATHAM.

ORCHESTRAL

COLUMBIA.

L.1708, 1709, 1710, 1711, 1712, 1713 (12in., 39s.).—**London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Weingartner: **Fantastic Symphony** (Berlioz). Eulenburg.

L.1715 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra** conducted by Sir A. C. Mackenzie: **Britannia Overture** (Mackenzie).

9076 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Percy Pitt: **Semiramide Overture** (Rossini).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1056 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**New York Philharmonic Orchestra: The Flying Dutchman Overture** (Wagner). Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

D.1054 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra and chorus** conducted by A. Coates: **Prelude, Act 3 and Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin** (Wagner).

D.1062 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra** conducted by Sir L. Ronald: **Carnival Overture** (Dvorák).

POLYDOR.

69781 and 69782 (12in., 11s. 6d.).—**Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by D. Fock: **Andante con moto, Second Movement of Symphony in C** (Schubert).

VOCALION.

A.0255 and 0256 (12in., 11s.).—**Aeolian Orchestra** conducted by Rhené-Baton: **Overture, La Grande Pâque Russe** (Rimsky-Korsakov).

BRUNSWICK.

15106 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra** (New York) conducted by G. Papi: **Entr'actes from Acts 3 and 4 of Carmen** (Bizet).

15090 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Cleveland Orchestra** conducted by N. Sokoloff: **Prelude to Act 3 and Wedding Music from Lohengrin** (Wagner).

PARLOPHONE.

E.10412 and 10413 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**State Opera House Orchestra, Berlin: Suite, Sigurd Jorsalfar** (Grieg).

ACTUELLE.

15210 (11½in., 4s.).—**Pathé Symphony Orchestra: Arlequin et Columbine, Polichinelle Menuet, and Cortège March from Mascarade Suite** (Lacome).

15215 (11½in., 4s.).—**Lamoureux Orchestra** conducted by C. Chevillard: **Fandango Asturiano from Capriccio Espagnol** (Rimsky-Korsakov).

Gramophones used: H.M.V. new model, No. 126, sound-box No. 4, with constant reference to a Columbia large table grand, sound-box No. 7.

Columbia.—Breaks in the symphony: Side 1, beginning of page 11 (Eulenburg); side 2, page 37, bar 6; side 3, end of first movement; side 4, page 79, bar 5; side 5, end of *A Ball*; side 6, page 105, bar 1; side 7, page 113, bar 1; side 8, page 125, bar 1. Side 9, end of *Scenes in the Country*; side 10, end of *March to the Gallows*; side 11, page 190 (beginning of *Ronde du Sabat*); side 12, end of work. Recording complete, but repeats in first and fourth movements not observed.

The *Fantastic* was done not long ago by H.M.V. (see "N. P.'s" review, issue of May, 1925, page 469, and Mr. W. R. Anderson's article in the same number). The new process Columbia naturally brings us benefits. The chief business in assessing these is to separate, as far as one can, mechanical from interpretative boons or drawbacks. My concern has been to try large portions of the H.M.V. records on my two instruments, immediately after I have heard each of the Columbia discs, and to try to say, not only which are the better, but which interpretation seems to me most Berliozian. The new issue, on either instrument (but particularly on the H.M.V.)

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Telephone : Brixton 223.

scores in giving a dramatic flavour to such pages as 8 and 9 of the miniature score. That wind chord in bar 4 of page 8, for instance, menaces, by just the lowering of an eyebrow, on the new record. I could have liked a softer *pp* at the start. There is quite a striking difference at the opening of side 2. In the new record (taken slower by Weingartner than by Rhené-Baton) there is, on the whole, greater life and significance, to my mind. But those bass reverberations on the new H.M.V. model are a shade too much of a good thing. Page 14 has a capital climax. Here the new records and instrument most fully justify themselves. The Columbia instrument makes these a little shrill. The H.M.V. is inclined to give a drum effect whenever the bass is *ff*. I attribute this (on an inspection of the machine's inward parts) to the form—and especially the material—of the retorted tube to which a great deal of the new effect is due. I cannot consider this tube the best devisable. Probably it will soon be improved upon. It has too large a note of its own, to my mind, and responds too readily to too numerous a variety of vibrations. On pages 35 and 36 (strings alone) the H.M.V. instrument curiously lets us down, I think, for a moment. The Columbia does not, to the same extent.

Side 3 brings some of the best climactic work the new recording has given us; superior to that of the Rhené-Baton records. The end of *A Ball* goes best on the new record, on the H.M.V. machine, which makes that upward imitative rush (page 95) very exciting, if a trifle muddier than on the Columbia instrument.

I think the Columbia machine reproduces the timbre of cor anglais and oboe a trifle better than the H.M.V. at the start of *Scenes in the Country*. Surely the succeeding part is too heavy and massive? Read page 103 of the score, for example, and ask where are those *pianos* and *leggero* arpeggios of the 'cellos. Page 108 is felicitously treated, however; here is a real *ppp*, of which I am bound to say we have far too few in almost all recording. This performance ripens and mellows here. On page 112, bar 4, the fifth note in my score is A natural. The violins repeat A flat, the second note. Probably it is a slip in the miniature score. On page 117 we do not get a *pppp* pizzicato, but perhaps that cannot effectively be recorded. At page 124, bar 1, the basses lag for three notes—a small but typical instance of the tiny displeasures that British under-rehearsal brings. The drums at the end of this movement (middle of side 9) seem to me purer in the old (R.-B.) record, though the new version is more ominous. Compare the melancholy piping that ends this solitary stroll with that of the shepherd in the last scene of *Tristan*.

The new methods give better balance. In the opening of the march, page 136, this is happily apparent. I gladly vote for this march as a splendid bit of evidence of the power and scope of the new recording. So is the Finale. The brass is a little dim at pages 184-5. The bells are capital. Save for the lack of a full "fatness" in the brass there is little to complain of in this last movement, and much to praise in Weingartner's handling. He perhaps seems to hold his hand rather long, but the end is a real climax. I do not think we shall soon get a better recording of this difficult work, though I think it only fair to say that the H.M.V. version was, on the whole, remarkably competent, and in just one or two places better than the new one. The album containing the records contains notes upon each, and a short account of the work.

Britannia is a kind of music not much pursued now. Mackenzie has a good ear for drama (witness his many pieces of incidental music to plays), and he uses his patriotic tunes well. The work is sub-titled "A Nautical Overture," and was inscribed to Alfred, Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, a sailor by profession. It was brought out at a R.A.M. concert (when Mackenzie was principal), that celebrated the seventieth birthday of the Academy. Flutes and oboes have the breezy first subject, clarinets and violas the quieter second theme, preceded by hints of a hornpipe. *Rule, Britannia*, the inevitable, soon creeps in, with bits of the hornpipe around it (an inch from inside of side 1). The gaiety is well kept up, and the bit with the *Rule* tune standing out on horns and bassoons is capital; so is the winding up with the hornpipe. This overture suggests that Mackenzie might have given us a good comic opera or two. His grand operas seem not to have had much chance, though some of them had (for those days) no mean success, in the eighties. As a pioneer of the British renaissance we hold him in affection.

Vocalion did this overture (on J.04017, green label) in earlier days. The new recording is naturally much superior to that.

Semiramide is a successful bit of recording, on broad lines. The horns in the second portion are good, without being superlatively lovely. The rest of the music is mostly Rossinian small-talk. The crashes are startling. Those who like "a good old row" of the red-fire and tinsel type will enjoy this.

His Master's Voice.—The *Flying Dutchman* is quite the best piece of storm music we have, I think. It would be interesting to make a little essay on how "programme music" attains its end when it deals with nature, seeking to depict natural phenomena. Suggestion is always the wiser and more musical way, but if one take in hand a storm it cannot be done without din. Wagner solved the problem of making the din musical, and of giving the overture abundant dramatic life. It sprang from his own experiences—both those on the sea of nature, and in the sea of life. Modern comparisons of method might be made in Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, the last movement from Frank Bridge's suite, *The Sea* (which is also a storm piece; Columbia records it), and one or two other suggestions of a similar kind. It will be agreed, I think, that for sheer force, physical and mental, Wagner's *Dutchman* prelude is hard to beat. Those smashing surges of sound come out, on this record, so that you feel the sting of the spray on your face. The orchestral wind is very lifelike, on pages 10 and 11 (Philharmonia). The break is at bar 199. The overture is played in full. I strongly recommend this record.

The *Lohengrin Prelude* is a thriller, too, but it is here a thought strident, and on the fast and furious side. I like a little more sheer dignity in it. The wind tends to shrillness—as if everyone were blowing for a wager, against everybody else. Coates is not quite my ideal Wagnerite. The chorus is bright, but lacking in body and bass somewhat, in the other record. Recording proportions are not yet secured, in choralism. This is not by any means indifferent work; and compared with the previous record of this music, it is an advance indeed.

Dvorák gave us some of the best specimens of rumbustious jollity in all music. He has such a happy-go-lucky, *Till Eulenspiegelish* air that we cannot forbear to link arms with him, even though we neither know nor care where he is going.

The *Carnival Overture* was planned as the centre of a set of three, linked thematically. The other two were *In der Natur* and *Othello*. The idea was to portray three ages of man—childhood, youth, and manhood. The colours in this gay picture come out exceedingly well in this admirable recording. The exposition contains the two chief themes (first, heard at once; second, by violins, more expressive—after two episodes have been glanced at, one by the full orchestra and the other by the violas, softly). In the middle comes a musing moment, when the youth wanders off, maybe, with a maiden. This reminds us of one of the *Slavonic Dances*, the third, if I remember rightly; only the tune is here a good deal slower. The tunes throughout have a Bohemian cast. The orchestration in the second half is not quite so effective, I think, until the recapitulation of the first theme is reached. The splashes of colour (triangle, harp, tambourine, etc.) are clear and vivid. The *coda* goes at lightning speed, and even though it is a trifle long-drawn-out, as is the manner of Dvorák, we enjoy being whirled off our feet like that. A capital bit of work by the orchestra and the Company.

Polydor.—A slice of the great *C major* of Schubert is welcome. It is perhaps better to issue a movement at a time. The breadth of the music is secured here. The opening oboe is a little pale. In the second side the outline of the uppermost part, which is somewhat hard on the Columbia machine, is softened on H.M.V. I find the bass, on the whole, less well brought out than the treble, on either, so I regard the record as a little less than fully satisfactory, in that respect. The serenity with which the music flows pleases me. I think this well conveyed in the records. The movement is recorded in full.

Vocalion.—To Rimsky-Korsakov's *Overture on Russian Church Themes* two quotations from Holy Writ are prefixed. One is from Psalm LXVIII: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered . . . even as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away." Mark, 16 furnishes the other. It is that passage describing how, when the women came to anoint the body of Jesus, they received from the angel the great tidings: "He is risen!" There is an introduction, in five time, bringing in what proves to be the first chief theme of the work. A violin cadenza leads to a 'cello subject, part of the second main theme. Trombones give out a bit of the opening ecclesiastical plainsong-like tune, answered by violins. The flute goes aloft in a cadenza, and clarinet has the former 'cello tune (end of side 1). About three-quarters of an inch into side 2 the *Allegro agitato* starts with a passage which leads into the first subject. The quieter next theme is a Russian Easter hymn (violins and oboe). A fanfare follows, and the original 'cello theme is heard (wood-wind). At the beginning of side 3 the trombone has a recitative, and the violin a cadenza. Then the

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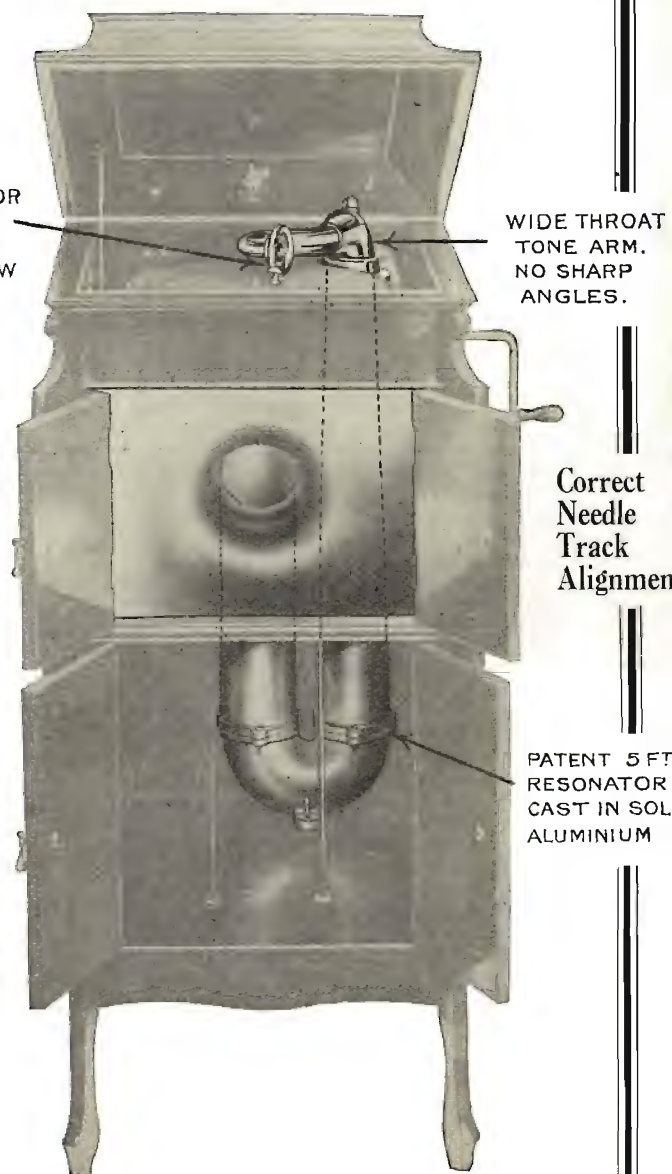
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foregoing matter is treated; but the Russian besetting sin of going in for colour and rhythmic repetition rather than development leads Rimsky to a boring section, noisy, and (to me) quite ineffective as development of his argument. The Easter hymn is heard again before the matter of the "exposition" section is recapitulated. Rejoicing, in a barbaric way, is well suggested by the last section.

The thing comes off as well as anything this orchestra has done. I have little but praise for the playing and recording; but the music is frankly mediocre.

Brunswick.—These American orchestras are satisfied to record such trifles. We ought to be thankful for the far better things we get from our British firms. In the *Carmen* extracts there is fullness of tone, but a shrillness in the upper wood-wind. Modern methods of recording are evident in the remarkable volume of tone attained. The Act 4 dance is extremely well done, apart from the rather piercing wind tone. The other record duplicates a H.M.V. record, but does so with rather less gorgeous tone. On its smaller scale, though, this is very live work, which only drags a trifle in the middle, and ends abruptly. The Wedding Music (orchestra only) is dignified, well knit, and eminently satisfactory (though cut). I like the breadth of treatment.

Parlophone.—*Sigurd Jorsalfar* (Sigurd the Crusader) is one of the historical dramas of the Norwegian Björnson, written in 1872, just before he began (at about the same time as Ibsen) to write social dramas. Grieg's suite of incidental music consists of three movements—a Prelude, an Intermezzo ("Borghild's Dream"), and a Triumphal March. If there is perhaps less of the essential Grieg here and more of the well self-trained absorber of the earlier nineteenth century European music, the suite, despite some of the usual weaknesses—four-squariness and sequential excess—makes pleasant light music. The scoring of the opening strains of the march, for strings alone, is effective. The first two movements are on one disc, the march on the other. The recording is adequate, without being remarkable in any way. The composer's arrangement of the music for piano solo is in the Peters Edition, No. 2655 (Augener).

Actuelle.—The Lacombe ideas are trite and as old as the hills. They are expressed with average neatness. This sort of theatre scoring, slick and effective enough in an auditorium, is not sufficiently interesting to detain us now, especially when the composer has nothing new to say. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* is in five connected sections, the last of which is this *Fandango Asturiano* (wrongly spelt on the label *Astusiano*). It treats Spanish dance rhythms very delightfully. The colours are rather too glaring here, and in places the balance is indifferent, but on the whole the recording brings out most of the points and makes them tell. A certain amount of this composer's capital was made to serve several purposes. Compare the opening of this Spanish piece with a well-remembered strain from his Arabian Nights *Scheherazade*. When he uses the authentic Spanish tags he is a master of his material. Until then he merely chatters in an Eastern lingo of Wardour Street, that is none the less attractive because it is like no tongue that ever was spoken.

K. K.

INSTRUMENTAL BEETHOVEN SONATAS

POLYDOR.—66176-66177 (two 12in. records, 13s. 6d.).—**Wilhelm Kempff: Pianoforte Sonata in C minor, Op. 13 (Pathetic)** (Beethoven).

PARLOPHONE.—E.10414-10416 (three 12in. records, 13s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand and Michael Rancheisen: Sonata in F major for violin and piano, Op. 24 (Spring)** (Beethoven).

POLYDOR.—66172-66173 (two 12in. records, 13s. 6d.).—**Wilhelm Kempff: Pianoforte Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 (Moonlight)** (Beethoven).

H.M.V.—D.1066-1069 (four 12in. records in album, 26s.).—**Isolde Menges and Arthur de Greef: Sonata in A for violin and piano, Op. 47 (Kreutzer)** (Beethoven).

The simultaneous appearance of four of Beethoven's most famous sonatas, all recorded complete, is one of those accidents that fill the music-lover with delight and the reviewer with dismay. Happily these works are all too familiar to require analysis or any other kind of explanation, and I can confine myself to commenting on the records themselves.

To begin with, then, the *Moonlight Sonata* has been already

recorded for H.M.V. by Lamond and the *Kreutzer* (for the same company), by Hayward and Bourne. The *Frühling (Spring) Sonata* has also appeared before, I fancy (was it a Columbia issue?), but I cannot recollect any previous rendering of the *Pathetic* for the gramophone. As to the titles by which the works are known, the *Kreutzer* gains its name from its dedication to an eminent violinist of Beethoven's day. The others were published without any heading beyond the key and the opus number; Beethoven approved, I believe, of the title *Pathétique*, invented by one of his admirers, but he is in no way responsible for the label by which the *Moonlight Sonata* is now universally known. I am not sure about the *Frühling*, but I doubt if it was Beethoven's name for the work.

Taking the sonatas in the order of their composition, I find that the *Pathétique* starts well (the opening *Grave* is well played and splendidly recorded), but deteriorates as we go on. The loud passages in the first movement have sometimes an unpleasant quality, especially when they are high up, for which I am inclined to blame the pianist, and the execution is not always clean. The break occurs as we reach the second *Grave*. In the slow movement the pianist obtains a lovely singing tone for the melody, but he employs this rather too much, and otherwise he gives one the feeling that he is trying to "do something" with this familiar music instead of letting it speak for itself. One or two chords are played so softly that they do not come out clearly on the gramophone. The last movement is the worst; the distortion of the rhythm becomes almost grotesque and entirely destroys the unity of the music. One does not wish to be hyper-critical, but what can one say when the penultimate bar (to take a single instance) sounds as though it were a crotchet short? The surface of the records is a little rough, but the recording otherwise is good.

Edith Lorand and her partner play the *Frühling* well enough to give one pleasure, but not well enough to satisfy the critical. The tone of the violin is apt to be a little hard on the high notes and somewhat scratchy on those uncomfortable accompanying passages that Beethoven so unkindly writes. Apart from this the first movement goes well and so does the delightfully humorous *Scherzo*, though the *Trio* is a little blurred. The second movement suffers from being dragged out at the end, and here it is the pianist who offends by playing his dull *arpeggios* too loud and distracting attention from the violinist, who plays the melody as sweetly as one could wish. But Miss Lorand has not been so successful with the *Finale*, whose mood of tranquil contentment she has somehow missed. Details stand out too sharply and the serenity of the mood is unduly interrupted. The recording is efficient and calls for no comment.

The breaks occur as follows: First movement, nine bars after the beginning of the recapitulation; second movement, beginning of bar 54; fourth movement, beginning of bar 105.

For the *Moonlight* we return to Wilhelm Kempff. In the first movement his singing tone is again in evidence, almost too much so, in fact, but to sustain the interest at the extremely slow *tempo* he adopts requires more imagination than he can apparently bring to bear. But by "imagination" I do not necessarily mean *rubato*; we get more than enough of that as it is. The second movement is again on the slow side, but this time the pianist "brings it off" and I would not wish him to play it otherwise. He is right, too, in making the *Finale* contrast very strongly both in speed and tone with what has preceded it, but he forgets the limitations of the gramophone. His rather slap-dash and thunderous methods might possibly do all right in the concert hall, but on a record much of the detail is inevitably lost. During the first movement one finds the surface noise of the disc a bit of a nuisance; otherwise the recording is quite adequate; an occasional lack of clarity I attribute, as I have said, to the performer.

Breaks: First movement, the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 42); third movement, the double bar (end of the exposition).

The *Kreutzer Sonata* is a considerably larger work than any of the other three and demands far more space than I can afford to give it. Its heroic mould has been fully realised by its interpreters, and they give us a rendering that holds our attention throughout. Miss Menges plays with great insight and ability, but without much charm of tone. High notes on the violin require a lot of care if they are not to sound squeaky when recorded by the new process; here, though they are pure, they are often shrill. De Greef is a little rough once or twice in his dealings with his instrument and there are places where he seems to strive after an unnecessary effect—the passage of rushing triplets with which he concludes side 7 supplies an example of this—but such defects of detail only throw into relief the excellence of most of his work.



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On Wings of Song (Mendelssohn). Piano Acc. (Tenor)
G 15893 { Invictus (Bruno Huhn). Piano Acc. Manuel Hemingway
Mélisande in the Wood (Alma Goetz). Piano Acc. (Bass)
Medley of Plantation Songs. Arr. by Dorothy Gilbert. Unacc.
G 15894 { Part I.—Intro. :—My old Kentucky Home. Way down yonder in de cornfield. The John Thorne Male
De Camptown Races. Massa's in de cold, cold ground Quartette
Part II. Intro. :—Poor Old Joe. Lucy Neal. Swanee River. Poor Old Joe

FOR LITTLE FOLK.

- G 15895 { The Old Woman and her Pig (Nursery Tale) Sybil Ainslie
The Story of Chicken-licken (Nursery Tale)

INSTRUMENTAL.

- G 15896 { Hark, Hark the Lark (Schubert-Liszt) Maurice Cole
Sonata in D minor (Scarlatti) (Piano)
G 15897 { Barcarolle "Tales of Hoffmann" (Offenbach) Kristoffersen Bros.
Menuet (Paderewski) (Accordion Duets)
Road to the Isles (March). Money Musk (Strathspey). Mrs. McLeod
G 15898 { of Ramsay (Reel) Pipe-Major Jas. Robertson,
Atholl Highlanders (March). Madeline Sinclair (Strathspey). The 4/5 Batt. Royal Scots
Wind that shook the Barley (Reel). Bagpipe Solo

ORCHESTRAL AND BAND.

- G 15899 { William Tell. Overture. Parts 1 and 2 (Rossini) Band of H.M. Welsh Guards
G 15900 { William Tell. Overture. Parts 3 and 4 (Rossini) (Under the direction of Lieut. Andrew Harris)
Royal Standard March (F. Stanton) Band of H.M. Welsh Guards
G 15901 { Coronation March "The Prophet" (Meyerbeer) (Under the direction of Lieut. Andrew Harris)
Milan Municipal Band

POPULAR SONGS.

- G 15902 { Dinah (Lewis-Young-Akst). Dance Orch. Acc. G. H. Elliott
Put me on the Old Stern-Wheeler (Valentine-Tunbridge) (The Original Chocolate Coloured Coon)
Dance Orch. Acc.
G 15890 { On Mother Kelly's Doorstep (G. A. Stevens). Orch. Acc. Billy Desmond
Moonlight and Roses (Black-More-Lemare). Orch. Acc.
G 15891 { When you and I were Seventeen (Kahn-Rosoff). Dance Orch. Acc. Billy Desmond
All my Dreams are of you (Blair Leyton). Orch. Acc.
G 15903 { Always (Irving Berlin). Orch. Acc. Billy Desmond
Every Step towards Killarney (Evans). Orch. Acc.
G 15904 { Too many kisses in the Summer (Rose-Dubin-Warren). Orch. Acc. Dick Henderson
Brown Eyes, why are you blue? (Meyer). Orch. Acc.
G 15905 { I wonder where my Baby is to-night (Kahn-Donaldson). Orch. Acc. Jack Charman
On the Midnight Special (Irving King). Orch. Acc.
Who put the kink in the winkle? (From "The Co-optimists") (Barnes-
Campbell-Connelly) Fred Gibson
G 15906 { You must have a little bit of fun (Wood-Gibson). Orch. Acc.
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Keep your skirts down, Mary Ann (King-Henderson). Fox Trot Rialto Orchestra
G 15909 { You forgot to REMEMBER (Irving Berlin). Fox Trot Jeffries and his
The Bells of St. Mary's (Adams-Mayerl). Fox Trot Rialto Orchestra
Kinky Kids' Parade (Donaldson). Fox Trot Jeffries and his
G 15910 { I'm so terribly in love with you (Wimperis-Ellis). Waltz with vocal refrain The Revellers
G 15911 { Bam Bam Barny Shore (Dixon-Henderson). Fox Trot with vocal refrain Cleveland Society Orchestra
Dream Pal (Baskette). Fox Trot Washington Dance Players
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Breaks : First movement : (1) End of the repeated exposition ; (2) the return to *tempo I* after the two bars of *Adagio* in the middle of the recapitulation (there is a letter "Q" in my copy at this *Adagio*). Second movement : (1) End of the first variation ; (2) end of the third variation. Third movement : End of the repeated exposition.

PIANO.

ACO.—G.15896 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Maurice Cole : Sonata in D minor (Scarlatti) and Hark, hark the lark (Schubert-Liszt).

BRUNSWICK.—50069 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Leopold Godowsky : Reflets dans l'eau and Clair de Lune (Debussy).

COLUMBIA.—D.1535 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—William Murdoch : Les Collines d'Anacapri and Bruyères (Debussy).

H.M.V.—B.2240 (10in., 3s.).—Una Bourne : Dance Créole and Pierrette (Chaminade).

POLYDOR.—19113 (12in., 6s. 9d.).—Michael Zadora : Pastorale (D. Scarlatti) and Prélude (Sgambati).

VOCALION.—A.0257 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—Sapellnikoff : Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 13 (abridged) (Liszt) and Invitation to the Waltz (abridged) (Weber-Tausig).

ZONOPHONE.—A.297 (12in., 4s.).—Max Darewski : Quatrième Valse, Op. 91 (Chaminade), and Paraphrase—"Ages Ago" (Max Darewski).

Debussy has received a liberal share of the recording companies' attention this month ; H.M.V. has presented us with the quartet, and here we have Brunswick and Columbia offering us four of his most attractive piano pieces. The Brunswick record is played by Godowsky, the Columbia disc by Murdoch, both of them reliable interpreters, and each is admirable in its way. Played one after another they provide an effective illustration of the difference between the old methods and the new. The tone of Godowsky comes out sweet and mellow, but faint ; his *fortissimo* puts no strain on the instrument (though loud low notes are a little dull), but his *pianissimo*, exquisite in quality, is not always audible ; the high notes are apt to disappear. Murdoch can command a far wider range of tone between *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* ; the notes at the top and bottom of the piano come out quite clearly and these advantages enable him to make *Les Collines d'Anacapri* quite electrifying. But the bass, though splendidly sonorous, becomes hard in *fortissimo*, and the resonance sometimes imparts to the music a blurred effect that is not desirable. Further experience with the new process will probably lead to the overcoming of some of its defects, and then—we shall see ! Just now I prefer to regard it as being in the experimental stage. I am very hopeful, but "wait and see" shall be my motto for the present, though I advise everyone to hear the Columbia record for himself.

Sapellnikoff does some brilliant playing for Vocalion in two examples of pianistic fireworks that suffer little from being "abridged." The sensational music is well recorded and will stand a loud needle, though I prefer to use a medium one myself. Of the two pianists who give us Scarlatti, I liked Maurice Cole the better ; his playing this month is very artistic and clean, and he and Liszt between them almost persuaded me that Schubert does not suffer in a "transcription." But Michael Zadora is not far behind ; he uses a slight *rubato* in his Scarlatti which I do not much like, and Sgambati's *Prélude* is not very effective on the gramophone ; but both records are worth hearing. Lighter fare still is provided by Una Bourne and Max Darewski. The former gives us an elegant rendering of some innocuous drawing-room music, only slightly marred by a lack of distinctness in one or two loud passages, due, I diagnose, to an indiscreet use of the sustaining pedal. This disc is a re-recording of B.291. Max Darewski's playing is less interesting and his *Paraphrase* is one of the dullest things I have ever listened to. The surface, too, is not quite smooth in this record ; in the rest of the month's piano list the reproduction gives little cause for comment, apart from the Columbia record I have referred to.

H.M.V.—D.1063 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Marcelle Meyer : Ragtime (Stravinsky) and Navarra (Albéniz).

At the last moment there arrives for review this piano record by an artist whose renderings of the most modern music have recently excited considerable interest in Paris and in this country. A single hearing gives me the impression that her secrets are a finished technique and a fine instinct for rhythm. Her fine performance of Navarra will be readily appreciated ; Stravinsky, of course, is more of an acquired taste, but, at any rate, Marcelle

Meyer likes him, and her sympathy has the happiest results on her interpretation. The recording by the newest process does her substantial justice.

VIOLIN.

BRUNSWICK.—15107 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Albert Spalding : Guitarre (Moszkowski) and Nobody knows de trouble I've seen (White).

COLUMBIA.—9077 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Mayer Gordon : La Ronde des Lutins (Bazzini) and Polonaise (Vieuxtemps).

PARLOPHONE.—E.10417 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Tossy Spinakowsky : Cavatina (Raff) and Melody (Gluck-Kreisler).

VOCALION.—X.9729 (10in., 3s.).—Albert Sammons : Liebesfreud (Kreisler) and Canzonetta (Sammons).

Of these records Mayer Gordon's is the most interesting ; the music has no great value, but a more brilliant display of technique I have seldom heard. The recording is good ; I noticed a few queer noises, but they were, I fancy, the protests that any violin is entitled to make when forced to turn cart-wheels at such a dizzy speed. Guitarre, played by Albert Spalding, is music of a similar kind. I have said hard things about this artist, and am glad to acknowledge the excellence of his playing here. The negro spiritual on the back (I suppose it is a negro spiritual) is a sad business, but let us hope that the Guitarre is the fruit of a good resolution that will not be abandoned at the end of Lent. The surface of this record is a trifle gritty, though there is nothing to find fault with in the reproduction. Tossy Spinakowsky has also struck a surface that is not quite up to the best Parlophone standard (though perhaps my advance pressing must bear the blame). He is a new artist, but the two familiar numbers with which he makes his *début* do not provide sufficient material for one to form a judgment of his powers. Sammons, as usual, plays well and has been well recorded, but here again the music is very slight.

'CELLO.

ACTUELLE.—10997 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Thomas Carnivez : Simple Aveu (Thomé) and Largo (Handel).

ACTUELLE.—15212 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Thomas Carnivez : Sonata in A major (Allegro) (Boccherini) and Concerto in D major (Adagio) (Haydn), both with piano accompaniment.

COLUMBIA.—3875 (10in., 3s.).—Antoni Sala : Danse Espagnole (Granados) and Liebesfreud (Kreisler).

H.M.V.—D.B.903 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Suggia : Sonate—Allegro, Gravió, and Vivace (Sammartini, arranged Salmon).

VOCALION.—K.05218–05219 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—Howard Bliss with Stanley Chapple (piano) : Sonata in D (Bach).

Suggia's record rather disappointed me, perhaps because I expected too much. I found the first movement of the sonata uninteresting, and either my ear was at fault or the 'cellist's rhythm is not quite all we expect it to be. The recording, too, is not very inspiring, rather from a lack of positive virtues than from any actual deficiencies, and the piano is so modest that even now I am not sure whether it actually takes part in the ends of the first and last movements or retires discouraged from the unequal contest. A redeeming feature is the full, rich tone of the 'cello's low notes ; if they would only sound like this in an ensemble !

Thomas Carnivez.—This is a name I don't know, but its owner is a competent 'cellist. The Haydn slow movement and the Boccherini make quite an agreeable record and the reproduction is good for a cheap disc. There are one or two moments when things are not quite right and, of course, one misses the orchestra ; but these defects do not destroy one's enjoyment of the music. The other record is less interesting.

Antoni Sala.—This 'cellist is a newcomer to Columbia. I have no fault whatever to find with him, but the pieces he plays, both of them taken, I suspect, from the violinist's repertoire, do not afford sufficient data to enable one to judge of his ability. If he is a great artist, let the company give him a chance to show it. Once again the sonority of the low notes reveal one of the possibilities of the new records and the new instruments.

Howard Bliss.—Only last month I was lamenting that Howard Bliss had recorded no major work for the gramophone. Whether the Vocalion Jove was listening or whether coincidence has stretched out an unusually long arm I cannot say, but here, at any rate, is an answer to my prayers, a four movement sonata by Bach. I have had difficulty in discovering the history of this work, written originally, it appears, for Viola da Gamba (an

instrument somewhat similar to the 'cello) with keyboard accompaniment. It is not referred to by Parry or my (old) edition of Grove. Perhaps some reader can tell me about it. But one does not need to know its history to enjoy it, and if it pleases other people as much as it pleased me it will prove a sound financial proposition for the company. The opening *Adagio* is perhaps less interesting than the other movements, and it is taken a shade too slow for my taste, but the following *Allegro* is all that one could wish and the slow movement that comes next is Bach in one of his most characteristic moods. I regret that the limitations of a twelve-inch record have necessitated the omission of bars 6-14 here, but I suppose it was unavoidable. In the *Finale* an invigorating, straightforward *Allegro*, the 'cellist deviates in a few details from my score, playing a passage of double-stopping in single notes in one place and substituting *arco* for *pizzicato* in another, but quite possibly it is my edition that is wrong. The records as a whole fully come up to my expectations; Bliss gives us the intelligent rendering and refined playing we demand of him, Stanley Chapple co-operates enthusiastically but discreetly at the piano and the company have seen to it that there should be nothing to find fault with in the reproduction.

ORGAN.

H.M.V.—C.1238 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Herbert Dawson: *Suite Gothique* (Introduction and *Prière à Notre Dame*) (Boellmann).

POLYDOR.—66002 (12in., 6s. 9d.).—Professor Walter Fischer: *Benedictus aus, Op. 59* (Reger) and *Improvisation über Weihnachtslieden*.

The effective but not too abstruse music of the *Suite Gothique* has made it a popular piece with organists, and the performance of two movements of it here gives us a better opportunity than we have had hitherto of estimating the value of the new recording as regards the organ. I found the extremes of *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* that the organist quite properly employed in the *Introduction* were not always reproduced quite clearly; the best part of the record is the second half of the *Prière*, where the use of some soft solo stops against a delicate background lead to some exquisite effects.

Professor Fischer plays such dull music that I cannot believe his record will be popular; his *Improvisation* is the most appalling string of platitudes I have ever listened to. The recording is good judged by the old standards, but does not compare well with the latest methods.

PETER LATHAM.

OPERATIC

TH. I. CHALIAPINE (bass) and **FLORENCE AUSTRAL** (soprano), with Symphony Orchestra and chorus, conducted by Albert Coates.—*Seigneur, daignes permettre* and *Quand du Seigneur le jour luira*, the Church Scene from *Faust* (Gounod). H.M.V., D.B.899, 12in., 8s. 6d.

ROSA PONSELLE (soprano).—*Suicidio* from *La Gioconda* (Ponchielli) and *O Patria mia* from *Aida* (Verdi). H.M.V., D.B.854, 12in., 8s. 6d.

BENIAMINO GIGLI (tenor).—*Tombe degl' avi miei* and *Tu che a Dio spiegasti* from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti). H.M.V., D.B.870, 8s. 6d.

RICCARDO STRACCIARI (baritone).—*Vien Leonora* and *A tanto amor* from *La Favorita* (Donizetti). Col. X.334, 10in., 6s.

WILLIAM HESELTINE (tenor).—*On with the Motley* and *No, Pagliacci*, no more from *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo). In English. Col. 3873, 10in., 3s.

OTTO WOLF (tenor).—*Siegfried's Tod* from *Götterdämmerung* and *Waldweben* from *Siegfried* (Wagner). Polydor 65696, 12in., 5s. 9d.

CLAIRE DUX (soprano) and **JOSEPH SCHWARZ** (baritone).—*Befreit, o welche Seligkeit* from *Trovatore* (Verdi), and *CLAIRE DUX: Musetta's Waltz* from *La Bohème* (Puccini). Polydor 70691, 12in., 5s.

LOTTE LEHMANN (soprano).—*Ohne Mutter bist du Kind gestorben* and *O Blumen, di ihr Gift im Ketch* from *Schwester Angelica* (Puccini). Polydor 72900, 12in., 6s. 9d.

EMMY HECKMANN-BETTENDORF (soprano).—*Ein Schönes war* and *Mit seinem Stab regiert er die Seelen* from *Ariadne in Naxos* (R. Strauss). Parlo. E.10421, 12in., 4s. 6d.

ROBERT BURG (baritone).—*Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge* from *Rheingold* and *Als du in kühnem Sange* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). Parlo. E.10422, 12in., 4s. 6d.

MIRIAM LICETTE, MURIEL BRUNSKILL, FRANK MULLINGS, KINGSLEY LARK, THORPE BATES, and GRAND OPERA CHORUS, with orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty: *King's Prayer* and *Finale, Act 1*, from *Lohengrin* (Wagner). In English. Col. L.1714, 12in., 6s. 6d.

Th. I. Chaliapine and Florence Austral.—The Church Scene from Gounod's *Faust*, sung by these artists and conducted by Albert Coates, is more interesting for the personality of its interpreters than for the interpretation itself. The idea was, I suppose, to allot the familiar strains to two big voices and a very full orchestra. The result is rather disappointing. The singers sound too distant and small in relation to the heavy band and chorus, and the effect of "atmosphere" is destroyed by the crowding and confusion of sounds in a limited space. It would have been better, I think, to let the organ do its customary work instead of relegating it to so many instruments. This may be Chaliapine's voice (frequently sharp, too), but it is not his commanding Mephistopheles; while Miss Austral's French is inaudible and her voice has grown unexpectedly thin.

Rosa Ponselle.—This soprano has a voice which records perfectly, and, being an accomplished lyric artist, her work on the whole gives unalloyed satisfaction. Hers is essentially a dramatic style, and she has the rare ability to express temperamentally through the medium of the gramophone. This *Suicidio*! is the best that has yet appeared—full of effective contrasts, from a delicate *mezza voce* to a rich *plena voce*. On the reverse side, and very nearly if not quite as admirable, is her *O patria mia* from *Aida*, better known, perhaps, as *O cieli azzuri*. Both are finely recorded.

Beniamino Gigli.—Quite a modern Edgardo is an interesting phenomenon, but somehow he reminds me of the new-fangled notion of dressing up the old operas in twentieth century costumes. Gigli has a splendid voice, unquestionably, but his methods sound just a shade too up-to-date Italian for the pure Donizetti school of the graveyard scene from *Lucia*. Still, significant declamation, stirring energy, and a trumpet tone on the high notes count for a good deal in things like the immortal *Tu che a Dio*, even though the timbre be a trifle nasal. In the *Tombe degl' avi miei* (really *Fra poco mi ricoverò*) the orchestration is capitally done. But why this new idea of disguising well-known arias under the title of the recitatives?

Riccardo Stracciari.—Here is a singer who does not put old wine into new bottles. He gives you Donizetti exactly as the Swan of Bergamo intended that he should be given. No Puccini or Mascagni or Leoncavallo in the wrong places. In the present instance I find the two lovely arias for the King in *La Favorita* sung with delicacy, reserve, and just the right measure of suppressed passion. The voice is suave and the phrasing done with a pure legato, even when one or two superfluous ornamentations are introduced.

William Heseltine.—Here at least we have the square peg in the square, not the round hole. The rage and jealousy of Canio, no less than Leoncavallo's music, justly calls for all the strenuous utterance that the land of Mussolini seems to be capable of. And behold, here it is cleverly simulated by a modest, retiring Englishman, both outbursts complete on an economical 10in. disc. Well, he has a good, powerful voice and plenty of robust vigour; and, after all, it is chiefly a question of these attributes.

Otto Wolf.—I know no harder task for a typical Wagnerian tenor than to have to deliver the whole of Siegfried's long and elaborate narrative in the last act of *Götterdämmerung* into the mouth of a recording horn. This singer was not equal to it in the degree that others might have been, because plastic vocalisation and the delineation of subtle shades of feeling are not in his line. His voice is hard, and from the moment at the start when he imitates Mime, it seems to suggest Mime all through rather than Siegfried. Still, the "Forest murmurs" are there, and very well the orchestra murmurs them too.

Claire Dux and Joseph Schwarz.—The *Trovatore* duet is well sung by both artists. It will be welcomed by gramophonists who do not mind the German text in Italian operas, and a similar remark applies to Claire Dux's neat rendering of the Musetta air from *La Bohème*, though the half-serious sentiment with which she invests it is not really appropriate to an exhibition of Parisian coquetry.

Lotte Lehmann.—Another eminent soprano giving us Puccini in her native tongue! Nevertheless, I am fain to admit that



HIGH TIDE AT JETHOU

Suor Angelica would be tiresome in any language. In the trilogy it comes between *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, and is equal to neither. I regard this as Lotte Lehmann's memorial tribute to the composer rather than to *Suor Angelica*. Poor sad, dreary creature!

Emmy Bettendorf.—Two long-drawn melodies from Richard Strauss's *Ariadne in Naxos*, both beautifully sung and excellently accompanied. One of them, *Ein schönes war*, recalls at moments *Der Rosenkavalier*—tender, sweet, and sympathetic, and delivered with impeccable breath-control.

Robert Burg.—I described this singer last month. In his latest records he is somewhat rough for Wolfram and too Alberich-like for Wotan, but he declaims distinctly.

Columbia Operatic Ensemble.—The *Prayer* and the *Finale* from Act I. of *Lohengrin*, filling each side of a large disc, form a substantial test of the holding capacity of the modern phonograph for an extensive "concourse of sweet sounds." The result in this instance is, on the whole, vastly creditable, and even more so in the case of the *Finale* than that of the *Prayer*. In the latter the soloists are so close and loud that they virtually obliterate the orchestra and chorus. One feels that they might have evinced a little more discretion and reticence without danger to their deservedly high reputations. The error of judgment only occurs where all the voices unite to "do their darndest," as the Americans say, and then it is rather suggestive of Babel. But Mr. Thorpe Bates enunciates the *Prayer* solo with fitting dignity; and both Mr. Frank Mullings and Miss Miriam Licette celebrate Lohengrin's victory over Tetramund with the right ring of jubilation.

HERMAN KLEIN.

CHORAL RECORDS

COLUMBIA.

The Sheffield Choir conducted by Dr. Henry Coward (unaccompanied): *In going to my lonely bed* (Edwards), *You stole my love* (Macfarren), and *The bells of St. Michael* (arr. Sir R. P. Stewart). 9075 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

POLYDOR.

Basilica Choir: *Im walde* (Schumann) and *Die Nachtigall* (Mendelssohn-Bartholdy). 66166 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

What edition of the Edwards *Madrigal* has Dr. Coward used? It is not the Fellowes edition. Nor is it the edition published by Novellos when Elliot Button discovered, only three years ago, some MS parts that had been missing. At least, if it is either of these editions it is treated so freely that it becomes Dr. Coward's own edition, which differs from these two far more than they from one another. I don't quite like this performance. The more one compares madrigal-singing of big choirs with that of the English Singers, the more one realises that this music was written for social performance, little more than one to a part, reading it round the family board as the English Singers do; that it is vocal-chamber music rather than massive choral music, and that, if it *must* be performed professionally, its true presentation is as chamber music. Obviously, choral performance is not barred; but the gramophone record, a permanency, should reproduce the true presentation. This performance, at any rate, is, I am sure, rather heavy, almost Handelian. Macfarren's *You stole my love* (with all its "Fie on you, fie on you"-s!) goes much better. The *Bells of St. Michael* is good, too, though the bells have quite exceptionally uncertain tonality at the opening. This is a fairly clever piece of realism, with not very much to it, but likely to be very popular. The recording is pretty well up to the wonderful new standard, with its harshness, too, though this objection almost vanishes if one goes into the next room.

The record of the German *Basilica Choir* confirms the report that England is pre-eminently the country for choral singing. On this record, intonation, attack, and tone are decidedly inferior. The reproduction is similar to the older English recording—pleasant, soft tone, with some foginess. The music is interesting, as nineteenth-century choral music goes.

C. M. C.

SONGS

VOCALION.

Olga Haley (mezzo-soprano) with piano accompaniment by Ivor Newton: *Wiegenlied*, Op. 98, No. 2 (*Cradle Song*) (Schubert) in German, and *Jardin d'amour* (arr. Vuillermoz) in French. X.9727 (10in., 3s.).

Frank Titterton (tenor), with the Aeolian Orchestra: *Thou shalt break them from Messiah* and *Total Eclipse* from *Samson* (Handel). K.05217 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Luella Paikin (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Ivor Newton: *Oh yes, just so, if fortune you would know* (Momus' Air from Bach's *Phoebe and Pan*), and *Berceuse*, Op. 1, No. 5 (Gretchaninov). A.0250 (12in., 5s. 6d.).

Morlais Morgan (baritone) with piano accompaniment by Stanley Chapple: *Longin' for you* (Howard Fisher) and *If I were* (David Richards). X.9728 (10in., 3s.).

Ethel Hook (contralto): *My Treasure* (Trevalsa) with piano accompaniment by Edith Page, and *The Rosary* (Nevin) with orchestra. X.9608 (10in., 3s.).

Victor Carne (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Berkeley Mason: *Serenata* (Come back) (Toselli), with violin obbligato by S. Kutcher, and *To Mary* (M. V. White). X.9726 (10in., 3s.).

H.M.V.

Eric Marshall (baritone): *Du bist die Ruh* (Peace), Op. 59, No. 3 (Schubert) and *Wie bist du, meine Königin* (Ah, sweet my love), Op. 32, No. 9 (Brahms). D.1055 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

Apollo Granforte (baritone), in Spanish, with orchestra: *Alma Llanera* (Gutierrez) and *La Paloma* (Yradier). D.A.699 (10in., 6s.).

John Turner (tenor): *My love is like a red, red rose* (traditional) and *Mary* (Richardson). B.2242 (10in., 3s.).

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone) with orchestra: *When the Sergeant-Major's on parade* (E. Longstaffe) and *Boys of the old brigade* (Barri). C.1245 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone) with orchestra: *Indian Love Lyrics* (A. Woodforde-Finden)—*Less than the dust*, *The temple bells*, *Till I awake*, and *Kashmiri love song*. B.2255-6 (two 10in., 3s. each).

COLUMBIA.

Muriel Brunskill (contralto): *To Daffodils* (Frederick Delius) and *Serenade* (from *Six Jester songs*) (Granville Bantock). 3876 (10in., 3s.).

Dame Clara Butt (contralto): *Peace* (Eric Fogg) and *Ships that pass in the night* (T. W. Stephenson). X.327 (10in., 6s.).

Hubert Eisdell (tenor): *The little green balcony* (Eric Coates) and *I love the moon* (Rubens). D.1536 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Doris Vane (soprano) with orchestra: *Sleepy Hollow Tune* (Kountz) and *Devotion* (Haydn Wood). 3871 (10in., 3s.).

ACTUELLE.

Ninon Vallin (soprano), with violin, harp and flute accompaniment: *Chanson Indoue* (Rimsky-Korsakof) and *Sérénade du Passant* (Massenet). 15216 (12in., 6s.).

BRUNSWICK.

Florence Easton and male trio, with orchestra: *Croon*, *Croon, underneath de moon* (Clutsam) and *A banjo song* (Weeden-Homer). 10211 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

I have been asked to mention that the instrument I have used for playing these records is one of the new H.M.V.'s, model No. 161, with sound-box No. 4. I have used Columbia medium and soft needles—almost always the medium.

One of the choicest song records for six months past is *Olga Haley's*. First of all there is the *Cradle Song*, a wee bit cold, I thought, at first (in feeling, of course, there was no questioning the lovely rich tone), then I realised its lovely purity and tranquil beauty. Here, too, is phrasing that we long for but seldom get. Judged by most of their recent records, German singers of Schubert can learn much from this record. Then there is another of *Vuillermoz's* delicious French songs. Another of each, please; and why let five months elapse, as they have since the last such record? And what about some English songs, folk-songs or the best moderns, from Miss Haley? But her diction is not yet perfectly clear.

Frank Titterton's record ought, perhaps, rather to be classified as operatic, but I have been asked to review it. These are the same two arias recorded by Herbert Teale two months ago on a three-shilling Beltona. This Vocalion record has the advantage of being a twelve-inch and including the recitatives, and I think the

orchestra is a little superior—good, in fact—in the *Messiah* aria, though unsteady in the other. But in the singing it is inferior. Titterton does not seem to have quite Teale's command of *Thou shalt break them*, and in *Total Eclipse* he never sings less than *mezzoforte*. He is not always on pitch, and he wobbles much—possibly to make up for the lack of real feeling.

It is good to have the delightful air from *Phæbus and Pan* recorded. I do not think Luella Paikin sings it with very great distinction. Rightly, this is not legato; but there is no crispness either; merely a breathless disjointness, either real or in effect. There is some of that wretched aspirating in the middle of a word and the words (important here) are not clear. The Gretchaninov is much more worthy of the presumed value of the record, though it has unsteady moments. The other three Vocalions can all be relied on for use in fashionable, non-intellectual drawing-rooms. In diction and reproduction they are all everything that could be desired.

The first of the new *Eric Marshall* records is good enough to make one look forward to those yet to come. I like his Schubert and Brahms (in these examples) better than nearly all the German "classics" we have had from German singers in the past few months. But that is not too committal. The large, complete view which raises interpretation to the highest level is hardly there. Marshall's point-making is not of the heavy German type, but rather of the English, superficially-expressive type so familiar in the singing of drawing-room ballads. *Du bist die Ruh* is slowed up and broken up beyond the limit, and *real repose* is, I think, missing. (Also, he hardly once attacks a phrase perfectly clean). I like the Brahms better. But in this he gives us (in the third verse) that sudden, excessive quickening which is such a trap for singers and which breaks a song with a snap. And the oft-repeated "Wonne-voll," which finds its climax of expression at the end of that verse, is not there realised. Recording is perfect, except for feeble piano tone in the Brahms.

The *Granforte* record gives us a full-throated performance of the pan-Spanish article—very effective and thoroughly low-brow. Personally I prefer de Falla, and Spanish folk-song. *Granforte* is a matter of a semitone or so sharp on the last top notes of *Alma Llanera*.

John Turner is, I think, a newcomer. He is a wee bit throaty, but manages *My love is like a red, red rose* fairly well—and it is a song which emphasises the extremes of a wide compass.

Peter Dawson is great in the Sergeant-Major's song—a splendid song, with a first-rate tune, that makes you want to dance grotesque capers all over the room. His recording of the *Indian Love Lyrics* and, notably, the orchestra's, are all that could be desired.

"The very melody of a passage is often obviously dependent upon and conditioned by its harmonic background." These words are written of Delius by his pupil-biographer, Philip Heseltine. Can they be applied to his setting of Herrick's *To Daffodils*? I suspect so, and I doubt whether such impressionistic melody can well be wedded to such verse as in this and the other three of Delius's little-known *Four Old Songs*. These matters *may*, of course, have nothing to do with the songs being aesthetically right. And anyhow, there is pure beauty of sound which is hard to resist, and Muriel Brunskill has made a very fine record in every way, except for touches of the typical contralto hooting which she generally avoids. (By the way, there is an interesting suggestion of Coleridge-Taylor in *To Daffodils*, especially at the end.) In the *Serenade* Bantock is not at his best. Miss Brunskill does much with the song, but the recording is not too good.

This month *Dame Clara Butt* gives us a song out of the common rut in one of Fogg's settings of Tagore's *Songs of Love and Life*. It is, I think, one of her best records. *Eisdell* and *Doris Vane* both waste themselves making much of four (oft-recorded?) banalities. If anyone doesn't yet know *The little green balcony* it is a waltz-song with a distinctly seductive lilt.

Gilbert and Sullivan's "idiot who praises every country but his own" may be referred to this *Actuelle* record of the *Chanson Indoue* for a lesson in comparative tastes. It is more vulgar than any version of it I have yet heard in England. The Massenet is thoroughly effective—an excellent example of French light opera. The reproduction of both is distinctly good.

Would that the music of the *Brunswick* record were on a par with the price. Good reproduction is wasted on such noises as these.

C. M. C.

BAND RECORDS

ACO.

G.15875 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *The Triumph of Right March* (H. B. Lovell) and *Chant du Rossignol* (Filipovsky) (piccolo soloist, Corporal F. C. Brook).

G.15876 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—U.S.A. 7th Regiment Band: *Kilties March* (Morris) and *St. Julien March* (Hughes).

BRUNSWICK.

B.2932 (10in., 3s.).—Walter B. Rogers and his Band: *The Forge in the Forest* (Michaelis) and *The Anvil Chorus from Il Trovatore* (Verdi).

B.2957 (10in., 3s.).—Walter B. Rogers and his Band: *Forward March* (Meinrath) and *Welcome to our City March* (Meinrath).

COLUMBIA.

3844 (10in., 3s.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards: *The Voice of the Guns March* (K. J. Alford) and *Triana, Spanish March* (S. Lopez).

3845 (10in., 3s.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *The Grenadier March* (Gabriel Pares) and *La Revanche de la France* (L. Closset).

H.M.V.

C.1234 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Scottish Patrol (The Gathering of the Clans)* (Williams) and *Naval Patrol (Britain's First Line)* (Williams).

PATHE.

5236 (size 12, 3s. 6d.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Merrie England Selection* (German), *Parts 1 and 2*.

VOCALION.

K.05210 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *Prince Igor Ballet Music* (Borodine), *Parts 1 and 2*.

ZONOPHONE.

A.296 (12in., 4s.).—Black Diamonds Band: *Jolly Robbers Overture* (Suppé) and *The Voice of the Bells* (J. W. Thurban).

The *St. Julien* served up by the United States Army Band is of a very mediocre vintage, and *Triumph of Right* and *Kilties* marches are equally ordinary specimens of their type. In all cases the playing is good and the recording clear. *Chant du Rossignol* is a fine piece of piccoline virtuosity. Corporal Brooks's agility is reminiscent of that of the late Eli Hudson whom we used to hear on records as far back as the days of the wax cylinder. The tone is very round and restrained and remarkably free from any objectionable shrillness.

Mr. Rogers and his band produce a very full tone which is inclined to be rather rough with a loud needle, but is very agreeable with a medium. There is plenty of *Anvil* in the *Chorus* and also in the *Forge*, while the *Forest* would seem to be a happy hunting ground for an ornithologist. All the birds have very healthy lungs, particularly the cockerel. The two marches are tuneful and crisply played, but the words "Forward March," spoken in good American twice in this record, sound much more like a polite request than an order! The surface noise on both these records is rather pronounced and has a peculiar timbre. In addition to that produced by the needle on the record it sounds as if the surface noise of the recording stylus on the original wax was excessive and is being reproduced.

Triana has an attractively but not too obviously Spanish flavour and is given a fine rhythm by Lieut. Miller, and as *The Voice of the Guns* is quite a good march this record is well worth acquiring. It is a good sample of the new process of recording. The two marches played by the Garde Républicaine Band are very commonplace. The tone of the band is light and the recording—particularly that of the side drum in *The Grenadier*—is good.

Other good examples of the new process of recording are the two patrols played by the Coldstream Guards Band. The patrol effect is not very successful, however, as the playing at the beginning and end of each record is much too loud and the gradation is such that for about three-quarters of the time the band is playing *ff*. It would have been preferable if the pieces had been played without any attempt to secure the effect of approaching and receding so as to give scope for more light and shade throughout. The *Scottish Patrol* is particularly well woven together and contains some very

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Vocals

- 1551 { Araby (H. Nicholls).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
The Tin Can Fusiliers (H. Nicholls).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1550 { I've Found a Bud Among the Roses (from "The Blue Kitten").
Sung by Guy Victor, with Orchestral Accomp.
Smoke Rings (from "The Blue Kitten") (Rudolf Friml).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1549 { Tumbledown Dreams (Hilmore and Pether).
Sung by Guy Victor, with Orchestral Accomp.
Buy Yourself a Broom (J. G. Gilbert).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1548 { The Tale of a Guinea Pig (Melville Gideon). Comedy Song. Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
Who Put the Kink in the Winkle? (Barnes, Campbell & Connelly). Comedy Song. Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orch. Accomp.
- 1547 { Let's Wander Away (Burtnett-Owens). Tenor Solo.
Sung by Franklyn Baur, with Orchestral Accomp.
Sometime (Fred Fiorito Gus Kahn). Tenor Solo.
Sung by Franklyn Baur, with Orchestral Accomp.

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- 1546 { La Golondrina.
Drowsy Waters.
- Played by Ferera and Poaluki.
Played by Ferera and Poaluki.

Dances**Greening's Dance Orchestra**

- 1545 { Cutie (from "The Blue Kitten") (Rudolf Friml). Fox Trot.
When I Waltz with You (from "The Blue Kitten") (Rudolf Friml).
Waltz. (Vocal Chorus, Chas. Bonheur.)
- 1544 { Bah, Bah, Bah, Bartholomew (Melchiffe and King). Fox Trot.
Araby (H. Nicholls). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, Dick Richards.)
- 1543 { Normandy (Robinson, Little and Britt). Fox Trot.
Bam, Bam, Bamy Shore (Dixon and Henderson). Fox Trot.
Played by the Imperial Dance Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields.)
- 1542 { Sometime (Fred Fiorito-Gus Kahn). Waltz.
Dreamer of Dreams (Fred Fiorito-Gus Kahn). Waltz.
Played by Continental Dance Orchestra.
Played by Newport Society Dance Orchestra.
- 1541 { Angry (Mecum, Cossard and H. and M. Brunies). Fox Trot.
Hugo, I Go where You Go (Gilbert and Fall). Fox Trot.
Played by the Missouri Jazz Band.
Played by Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields.)

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clever counterpoint. In my ignorance I quite fail to see the aptness of the introduction of a negro song into the *Naval Patrol*.

The selection from *Merrie England* is well played and recorded, and the spirit of the music is evidently appreciated by the band as was the case in their recent *Actuelle* record of this music.

The oriental atmosphere of the *Prince Igor Ballet Music* is splendidly conveyed by the Life Guards Band. The voice parts are admirably arranged and but for a slight lack of elasticity this would be an almost perfect record. The tympani at the beginning of side 2 are splendidly recorded, but how is it that they are heard no more after their opening solo? In the orchestral score they are used to beat out the rhythm throughout this dance, but keenly as I have listened I cannot hear a trace of them in this arrangement after their solo is finished.

The Jolly Robbers is a typical Suppé overture, gay and tuneful. Playing and recording are both good, as also are they in *The Voice of the Bells*, which is more interesting than I had anticipated from the title. A good balance between the tubular bells and the rest of the band is secured and the former are much more in tune than is the case frequently.

W. A. C.

NEW-POOR RECORDS

Machine used, Peridulce Cabinet; soundbox, Peridulce; needles, Euphonic.

ACO.—Elsie Francis-Fisher's second CONTRALTO record fulfils the high promise of the first with an excellent rendering perfectly recorded both for voice and accompaniment, of that difficult song to vocalise, *Homing* (2s. 6d.). Denis S. Wright's *Dance Suite*, ORCHESTRAL (2s. 6d.), is a good record showing the drums. German's *Coronation March* (2s. 6d.) is vigorously played by the R.A.F. MILITARY BAND and the recording shows the drum.

BELTONA.—That writer of good melodies, Walford-Davies, gives us a modern Scots song, *Hame*, sung by Hughes Macklin, TENOR (3s.). POPULAR SONG: John Roberts (baritone) is quite perfect in *Always* (2s. 6d.). WALTZ: *I'm so terribly in love with you* (2s. 6d.) than which no recent number is prettier. A particularly good TANGO, although containing chromatic writing, is *The Golden Tango Girl* (2s. 6d.). MILITARY BAND: Two of Massenet's *Neapolitan Scenes* make a very brilliant double (2s. 6d.).

DUOPHONE.—*Two Little Dances* (Minuet and Gavotte) (2s. 6d.) should be acquired by every good judge of MILITARY BAND music who desires something light rendered as perfectly as Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's name guarantees.

HOMOCHORD.—So long as the very vigorous and wonderful new recordings of the PIANOFORTE made in America are performed on instruments that sound exactly as if the felt had been stripped from the hammers, Mr. Sternberg can easily maintain the supremacy for London in this branch of work; *Etude* (Valse), Saint-Saëns (4s.), played by Gertrude Meller. VIOLIN: Cavalier H. Solloway has been heard by many over the ether and by a few at his recent recital. His exceedingly perfect stopping (even in the octaves) and clean workmanship make records as true as the original performance. There is a good series of them to come, and the first, ready now, is *Romanza Andaluza* (4s.).

IMPERIAL.—Two very happily chosen numbers are *I've found a bud among the roses* with *Smoke Rings* (both from the Blue Kitten) on the reverse (2s.), and a Melville Gideon song, *The tale of a Guinea-pig* (2s.), sung by George Berry.

PARLOPHONE.—UNCOMMON RECORD: Without exception the finest example of difficult male-voice vocalisation I ever heard is the unaccompanied Jewish record by Chief-Cantor Sirota, *Weschmuru* (2s. 6d.). I hardly know whether he is to be described as a tenor or as a high baritone with a head voice, but I have no doubt whatever that every male singer in the country would derive profit from studying his brilliant workmanship. I have no better CELLO record of a song tune than *Caro Mio Ben* (2s. 6d.), played by Julius Berger. ORCHESTRAL: *Second Serenade*, Toselli (2s. 6d.), is played by the Bohemian Orchestra. The most entirely convincing and vigorous BAGPIPES record I have is *The Athol Highlander* (2s. 6d.). PICTURE PALACE MUSIC of the best kind, played by a few nice instruments and a big piano, is Coleridge-Taylor's *Othello Suite* (2s. 6d.).

REGAL.—INSTRUMENTAL TRIO, *Serenade Napolitaine* (Leoncavallo) (2s. 6d.) is a good example of super-clean recording. No tenor has such good records on this list as William Thomas; this month he sings *Indian Love Call* (2s. 6d.).

WINNER.—I have heard many unsatisfactory renderings of extracts from Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* music. It therefore rounds most highly to the credit of 2LO MILITARY BAND that they have made a record (2s. 6d.) of this, with the drums not omitted, that is far more than satisfactory, positively gorgeous.

VELVET FACE.—Tatiana Makushina easily leads this list with *Chanson Indoue* and *On the Steppe*, both sung in Russian and on one disc (green label) for half a crown, and a French song of which I am very fond, *Le Nil* (Leroux) with Bizet's *Agnus Dei* on the other side (12in., green label) for four shillings. ORCHESTRAL: *Le Roi Va dit* (4s.). SCOTS GUARDS BAND: *Zampa* (4s.). For those who like modern music 2LO play *Jupiter*, from Holst's *The Planets*. I find it much easier to guess what the composer is driving at in this record than in any other of the same work.

ZONOPHONE.—PIANOFORTE: There is a temperamental rendering of Chaminade's *Quatrième Valse* by Max Darewski (4s.). I think the recording is "new style," and should it be so thereby is proof that we are doing things better this side of the herring pond than they are on the other, for certainly the hammers of the piano are not nearly so hard as are those of the instruments used by the Americans recently. SAXOPHONE: A wholly delightful rendering of the well-known *Souvenir* (2s. 6d.), played by that master of sweetness, Rudy Wiedoft.

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—ORCHESTRAL: *Danse Suite* (ACO.). PIANOFORTE: *Etude* (Valse) (HOMO.). MEZZO-SOPRANO: *Le Nil* (V.F.). CONTRALTO: *Homing* (ACO.). POPULAR SONG: *Always* (BELTONA). SCOTS SONG: *Hame* (BELTONA). TANGO: *Golden Tango Girl* (BELTONA). MILITARY BAND: *Flying Dutchman* (WINNER). VIOLIN AND PIANO: *Romanza Andaluza* (HOMO.). UNCOMMON RECORD: *Weschmuru* (PARLO.). CELLO: *Caro Mio Ben* (PARLO.).

Since the talk about "Lifebelts" I hear that Woolworth's here are very busy selling rubber tea-pot spouts. I hope none of our readers are buying them to put on their gramophones, because if the rubber is not as thick and as strong as it should be the sound-box will get into a state of oscillation on big notes and spoil the records very quickly.

H. T. B.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

The Blue Kitten, now being played at the Gaiety Theatre, London, where by the courtesy of the management I was able to see it, is recorded by H.M.V. with five 12in. records of the singers and chorus and Gaiety Orchestra, and a 12in. selection by the Savoy Orpheans (4s. 6d. each), as well as by two dance records which are reviewed elsewhere. It is not for me to criticise the play or the performers, or I could say much; but I can bear witness to the fidelity and clarity of the recording throughout. It is just what admirers of *The Blue Kitten* want, and W. H. Berry's record (C.1241) of *Breakfast in bed* and *Summer is here* is good enough for anyone's collection of comic records, though the chorus is unintelligible. Next to that I should place the Savoy Orpheans' *Selection* (C.1246), then the two duets of Bobby Howes and Estelle Brody (C.1243) and those of Roy Royston and Dorothy Brown (C.1240). In an ordinary room all these records sound better with a soft steel or fibre needle, and even the verve of Ethel Levey and Roy Royston less disquieting. There is a good record of two of the best tunes, *Cutie* and *I found a bud among the roses*, sung by Fred Bishop on Parlo. E.5531 (2s. 6d.), and of the latter with *Smoke Rings* on Imperial 1550 (2s.).

Sir Harry Lauder had a record (H.M.V., D.1043, 6s. 6d.) of *I'm the boss of the house* and *I like my old home town* last month; and needless to say the new methods have reproduced his voice with an even more astounding intimacy than in earlier days. The songs do not perhaps show an advance, but they serve their purpose. Norman Long in *I'm blasé* and *Prophecies* (H.M.V., C.1235, 4s. 6d.) is funny on stereotyped lines, and Ramon Newton, the vocalist of the Savoy Orpheans, sings *I'm an airman* and *If you knew Susie* (H.M.V., B.2241, 3s.) as they should be sung. In the March bulletin Sir Harry sings two of his more maudlin successes on D.1064 (6s. 6d.) and Norman Long is much better in *The Drage Way* and *Homes* (B.2257, 3s.). There is a Melville Gideon record of *Pirates Lullaby* and *The Tale of a Guinea-pig* on the list (B.2269, 3s.), with a band to supplement his piano accompaniment, which is well worth getting. The de Groot this month is of two pretty trifles from Franz Lehar's *Paganini* (B.2259, 3s.), and I think this will be very popular; but I heard de Groot say

that *Babette*, which I noticed last month, is the best record that he has yet made.

There are no end of songs this month: **Bruce Wallace**, **John Curtis**, **Robert English**, on Parlo.; **Lewis James** and **Arthur Eade** on Columbia; **Billy Desmond**, **Dick Henderson**, and **Fred Gibson** on Aco; **George Berry**, **Robert Kinnear**, **Charles Bonheur**, **Franklyn Baur** on Imperial; **Arthur Cox** and **Clarkson Rose** on Zonophone; with **Billy Williams** in two Scots songs (Aco. G.15762, 2s. 6d.) in his marvellous diction, **G. H. Elliott**, **Jack Charman** (also *Aconites*), **Harry Fay** (Parlo.), and the rest of them; while **Miss Peggy English** (not so English either, when you hear her) holds her own very creditably in the male company with *Sweet Man* and *Give me just a little of your love* (Vocalion X.9732, 3s.).—But my efforts to discriminate between all these records were suddenly stopped by an encounter with **Nelson Keys** and his March record on Vocalion X.9715 (3s.). On one side of it he does a really striking imitation of **Henry Ainley**, **George Graves**, **Harry Tate** (and son), **Wilkie Bard**, **George Grossmith**, and **Harry Weldon** reciting nursery rhymes. I doubt if this could be bettered by any mimic alive. On the other side is *The one I love*, "as sung in London, Paris, and New York"; and as I listened to Mr. Keys I felt that the whole month's, the whole year's output of popular songs was epitomised. It was enough. I could no longer endure *Normandy*, *Always*, *Who put the kink in the winkle?*, *Brown eyes*, *When you and I were seventeen*, and *I wonder where my baby is to-night*, as sung by **Bill Brewer**, **Jan Stewer**, **Peter Gurney**, **Peter Davy**, **Daniel Whiddon**, **Harry Hawk**, and that excellent comedian **Uncle Tom Cobby**. **Nelson Keys** has made the record of the month.

Layton and Johnstone need no praise from me. In *I would like to know why* and *Bam-bam-bamy shore* (Col. 3888, 3s.) and *Swanee Butterfly* and *Don't let nobody steal you from me* (Col. 3889, 3s.); they combine the sentimental and the racy with their usual infectious lilt. **Percival Mackey** has potted *Mercenary Mary* into a piano ten-inch record (Col. 3847, 3s.) of great resonance and brilliance; **Harry Reser** repeats on Vocalion X.9731 (3s.) the banjo solo, *Heebie Jeebies*, which he did for Columbia a month or two ago, but with *Oh boy, what a girl* on the other side; there's an attractive Aco record (G.15898, 2s. 6d.) of **Pipe-Major Jas. Robertson**, and a *tour de force* by the **Kristoffersen Brothers**, an accordion duet of *Paderewski's Menuet*, and the *Barcarolle* from *Tales of Hoffmann* (Aco. G.15897, 2s. 6d.). The **J. H. Squire Celeste Octette** are good in the *Gavotte* from *Mignon* and *La Cinquantaine* (Mario) on Col. 3877 (3s.) and so are **Moschetto and his Orchestra** in the favourite *Canzonetta* (d'Ambrosio) and *Gretchaninov's Berceuse* on Vocalion X.9730 (3s.). I think that this is **Moschetto's** best record.

Rudy Wiedoeft has another saxophone record for Brunswick (2945, 3s.) with *Tchaikovsky's Melodie* and his own *Mazanetta*; and appears on Zonophone for the first time (2675, 2s. 6d.) in his own *Saxarella* and *Drda's Souvenir*. He is first-class on his instrument. The **Radio Franks** (Brunswick, 2955, 3s.) are attractive in vocal duets of *Croon a Little Lullaby* and *Oh Boy, what a Girl!* I heard this last song deliciously sung at the Café de Paris the other night by **S. M. Nesbitt** playing his ukulele for accompaniment. He has recorded it on Parlo. E.5526 (2s. 6d.) and for this kind of twilight drawing-room music would be hard to beat.

PEPPERING.

H.M.V. SCOTS SUPPLEMENT

What a debt Scottish music owes to the band of versifiers who kept alive her people's songs! **Burns**, **Hogg**, **Lady Nairne**, **Allan Ramsay**, **Tannahill**, **Joanna Baillie**, and a score more; all were the means of giving renewed life to fine tunes. Their work was rarely great poetry, but the rich homeliness and wisdom, the burning love for kin and country, the blithe sweetness and winsome air in it, have delighted thousands not of Scots descent. To him who has any trace of Scottish blood the songs are ever poignant, bringing the smile to the face and the tear of honest sentiment to the eye. The sheer beauty of the tunes captures the heart. Consider *Ca' the yowes* or *The bush aboon Traquair* (that we heard, with other Scots tunes, in *Polly*), the rich austerity of the Covenanted psalm-tunes such as *Martyrs* and *Stracathro* (some of which the Glasgow Orpheus must give us on later discs), the pawky humour, full of knowledge of men's ways, in *The wee cooper o' Fife* and *The laird o' Cockpen*, the love of home and the dauntless courage that breathe in the war-songs. Is there any folk-music to beat Scotland's, for versatility of beauty and significance?

It is good, then, to have from H.M.V. this batch of Scots airs,

and from other companies smaller issues of such things, from time to time. The singers have the right spirit. Voice matters less than heart, here. The folk-song expert can have some fun in deciding which songs are strict folk-songs and which were made by some form of "art music" process. There are pretty clear evidences in most cases. The rest of us will take our pleasure in these strains, first and foremost because of their power to move our hearts.

All the discs are ten inch, with the exception of C.1231 and the Royal Air Force Band's *Reminiscences of Scotland*.

I put on first the GLASGOW ORPHEUS CHOIR (E.409, 4s. 6d.), for that famous body has given me so great delight in the flesh that I was eager to hear how much of its spirit came through on the disc. Try first the *Eriskay Love Lilt*. The arrangement is a little heavy for the simple tune. The choir's ethereal tone is well suggested. Their strongest card is imagination. The old gibes at Scots dourness ought to have been put aside once for all, the first time the Orpheus sang. **Hugh Robertson** plays upon his folk as another artist plays upon the violin. Their imaginatively tuned tone comes out with something of the original fragrance, though their colour is not quite so richly shown forth. In *Scots wha' hae* the balance is not given very delicately, and the new recording twang is somewhat in evidence.

JOSEPH HISLOP (D.A.749, 6s.) makes a brave effort to forget his operatic history. That experience does not help a man to sing Scots songs. I don't like the trace of sentimental sobs in the second verse. This is disappointing, and worse still is his cadenza in this verse. No! This is the wrong style altogether, friend **Hislop**. *Bonnie wee thing* is better, but he is singing out too much to the far gallery, not to his love on the braid.

ANDREW SHANKS has the right glint in his e'e, and the dry humour in his voice, for *The wee town clerk*. **Keel's Bonnie George Campbell** is a good example of the modern ballad. The voice is not specially remarkable, but the style is sympathetic (B.2202). Mr. Shanks is braw in *A hundred pipers* and *Cam' ye by Athol?* The piano might give bigger support, of the bagpipey kind (B.2218). In *Lock the door, Lariston* (B.2217), though the actual tone is somewhat dry and not every note is fully vocalised, there is a notable sense of power in the interpretation. The singing grips. On the other side is the lighter *Gae bring tae me a pint o' wine*.

Loch Lomond is a good test for any singer. It contains all sorts of pitfalls for the inartistic. **Miss DAVIDSON**, apart from a short phrase or two and a little too much space between phrases, deals truly with the song. There is a certain reasonable and usual freedom of rhythm in the singing of traditional songs, though to the modern musician the use of this freedom is not always admirable. We do like to feel the fundamental swing of a tune, to which the sometimes abused word "inevitable" might be applied. On the other side of B.2116 is *The Auld Fisher*. Here the voice is used a thought heavily, with rather too many even stresses—one of the commonest things I notice in all singing.

AUGUSTUS BEDDIE recites *Dreamland Toon* (with string trio accompaniment) and *Me an' Andra* (B.2219). The sentiment is well laid on. In *Guddlin'* (which means catching fish with the hands) and **Burns's Address to a Haggis**, the speaker's voice is a trifle low-pitched and sounds a trifle as if resounding in a cavern. Let this definition set at rest the Sassenach's abounding doubts as to the nature of the haggis: "A dish composed of the chopped heart, liver, and lungs of a sheep, onions, suet, etc., seasoned and mixed with oatmeal, and boiled in a sheep's stomach." Now can you wonder any longer why the Scot has conquered England?

H.M.V. ought to offer a prize to the first pure-bred Englishman who translates all the Scots words in these recitals. The vocal inflections are excellently characteristic—well worth tasting by lovers of the kindly Scots tongue.

ALEXANDER MACGREGOR takes *Scots wha' hae* very slowly, as seems to suit this solemn address. He fronts it strongly, and gives out the brave sentiments in proper style. His words, here and in *The Piper o' Dundee*, are mostly very clear (B.2210, 3s.; all the "B." records are 3s.). His voice has not quite the ideal note for such songs as the *Skye Boat Song* (B.2211). His sobriety is a good quality. The vocal tone shows signs of (I think) age, but it is good for a great many Scots songs yet. He does not make quite enough of the sly humours of *Duncan Gray* and *The wee, wee German lairdie*, two good lilt, though the second comes off quite cheerily (B.2212).

BLOSS HERON pleases me well in *Ca' the yowes* and *There grows a bonnie brier bush* (B.2213), though I have a trifle of doubt about the portamento in the first song. On B.2214 her *Jock o' Hazeldean* (in which her ee family of vowels ring a trifle hardly—one slight-

fault in her singing, as reproduced) is partnered by Crue Davidson's *Hush-a-ba, Birdie*. Again certain resonances are a wee bit hard in this otherwise well-proportioned voice. Her voice and style enfold the song amply—perhaps just a shade too amply. This is excellently controlled singing.

I noticed previously some well-rhythmed reels and such, played by Meredith Kay's orchestra. There is a bagpipe flavour in the orchestration of these (C.1231, 4s. 6d.), and a harsher suggestion which is not quite so pleasant. Is there here a faint scent of jazz?

THE SCOTS COUNTRY DANCE ORCHESTRA plays two dances (B.2215). Here is a gay and sufficient accompaniment for the exercise of folk dancing, that is gaining ground everywhere. Scots readers who may not have heard of it may like to know that there is now a Scottish Country Dance Society that parallels the work of the English Folk Dance Society. Its secretary is Mrs. Stewart, 3, Park Circus, Ayr. Paterson's have issued a "Country Dance Book" for the society (2s. 6d.) that contains full instructions for treading these and a baker's dozen other jolly measures.

THE AIR FORCE BAND'S *Reminiscences* are of an ancient brand. Some Holst or Vaughan Williams ought to arise in Scotland and do the thing better. The joining-up tags are so oddly out of it with the Scots tunes. These ought to be got rid of; they are the merest bandmaster's small change—and dubious money at that, for they contain some wretchedly inappropriate harmonies (C.1230). K. K.

DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

THE number of records issued month by month seems to advance in geometrical progression, and I begin to be haunted by terrible visions of the day when all the makes arrive, and up to time; this month I am again saved by several defaulters. The most significant change is the sudden fall in the number of tangos—why on earth is this? I regret it and turn away mournfully to wait in hope of a happier harvest next month. I have been asked to name the machine that I use for testing the records; it is one of the old H.M.V. table grand models with a No. 2 sound-box, and the needles I use are H.M.V. loud tone, which are certainly the most satisfactory for dancing. I must confess that I covet one of the new H.M.V. machines, but at the same time boast with more than a boaster's confidence that this beloved instrument is the best that I have ever heard!

WALTZES.

PARLO. E.10420 (12in.).—*Babette* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." It seems that Marek Weber only has to put his hand to a thing and it becomes nearly perfect. This record of *Babette* is worthy of comparison with last month's *Tea for Two*.

COL. 3883.—*Every step towards Killarney* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." This is not a first-class tune, but it is played in good time by a band which has excellent rhythm. There are fine low notes, but the whole, perhaps, is a little sugary.

IMP. 1542.—*Sometime* (Continental Dance Orchestra) and **Dreamer of dreams* (Newport Society Dance Orchestra). This version of *Sometime* is first class; to see the name of this band at once reminds me of *Tropical Palms*, a record which came in for much praise some months ago.

PARLO. E.10418 (12in.).—*Poet's Love, Parts 1 and 2* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). This is a record hardly to be recommended primarily for dancing, as it is rather quiet. Nevertheless, it is one which all waltz devotees should possess.

H.M.V. B.2246.—*Love waltz* (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Fox-trots." This is the best tune from *Betty in Mayfair* which I—not having seen the show—have heard so far. Of its kind it is very good.

ACO. G.15912.—**By the Mississippi* and **Memories of a rose* (Pacific Marimba Band). The first is quite admirable of its kind, but then...

IMP. 1545.—**When I waltz with you* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

BRUN. 2831.—**A waltz in the moonlight* and **Hawaiian memories* (Castlewood Marimba Band). Rather quiet for Brunswicks.

BRUN. 2951.—**Close your eyes* and **Garland of old-fashioned roses* (Castlewood Marimba Band). Both much louder than the above.

ACTUELLE 10981.—**Wondering and Every step towards Killarney* (Broadway Waltz Orchestra).

BRUN. 2917.—**Estudiantina* and **Verona* (Mario Perry, accordion solo). I was not sure whether this record was entirely in my province, but I quickly discovered that it was, for the volume of sound produced is really quite surprising, and the record is quite to be recommended for dancing.

PARLO. 5530.—**Deep in my heart, dear* (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Sentimental and rather saccharine.

COL. 3884.—**I'm so terribly in love with you* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." Loud.

H.M.V. B.2248.—**When I waltz with you* (Kit-Cat Band) and see "Fox-trots."

VOC. X.9737.—**Let me call you "Sweetheart"* (the Windsor Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

VOC. X.9734.—**Close your eyes* (V.) (Don Parker and his Band) and see "Fox-trots." Quietish; quite beautifully played and sung.

ACO. G.15910.—**I'm so terribly in love with you* (V.) (the Revellers) and see "Fox-trots." Very much in contrast to the Columbia record above.

COL. 3885.—**Pal of my cradle days* (V.) and **All my dreams are of you* (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band).

TANGOS.

ZONO. 2671.—**Picollo Navio* (V.) and **Ay si, ay no* (V.) (Manuel Pizarro's Argentine Orchestra). Surprisingly enough, this is the only tango this month; a very slump!

ONE-STEP.

ACO. G.15907.—**The Tin Can Fusiliers* (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

FOX-TROTTS.

H.M.V. B.2244.—**Where does the candle-light go* (V.) and *Paradise* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). The superb quality of the second of these tunes makes it impossible not to put this record first in spite of the deficiencies of the other. The tune is a good one; it is played without theatricality, has splendid volume, and a wonderful accompaniment; at the same time it is beautifully restrained.

COL. 3862.—*Breezin' along and I'm sitting on the top of the world* (the Denza Dance Band). The Denza Band has splendid "go" and extraordinary virtuosity; furthermore the Columbia recording is first class. This record is not the loudest, but it has a fine volume of sound.

BRUN. 2949.—**Angry* and *In the purple twilight* (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra). *Angry* has appropriate volume; *In a purple twilight*, melody perfectly played. Both are very rhythmic.

PARLO. E.10419.—*Bambalina* and *Parisien Blues* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). *Bambalina* is great fun, but both are quite entrancing tunes played in such a way that one can either dance or listen to them and with equal pleasure.

COL. 3861.—*Good-bye* and **I would like to know why* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band). Very, very loud, but full of tone. The loudness of the second tune seems to be almost more than the instrument can manage, but it is never provoked into blasting.

BRUN. 2963.—*Remember* and **Oh, boy, what a girl* (Isham Jones Orchestra). *Remember* wears well, but then it is played on this occasion by Isham Jones, who is an unrivalled artist. This record has many good points which are not typically American. Loud.

BRUN. 2962.—**Normandy* (V.) and *Want a little lovin'* (V.) (Abe Lyman's California Orchestra). Played with fine restraint but real individuality.

COL. 3884.—*My castle in Spain* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Waltzes." This is very loud, but it has marvellous definition.

BRUN. 2937.—**Milenberg joys* and **If you hadn't gone away* (the Cotton Pickers). Loud and rhythmic.

BRUN. 2934.—**Mighty Blue* (V.) and **That's all there is* (V.) (Abe Lyman's California Orchestra).

BRUN. 2935.—*Save your sorrow* and **Ya! Ya! Alma* (V.) (Ray Miller and his Orchestra).

- BRUN. 2943.—**Footloose* (V.) and **I miss my Swiss* (V.) (Carl Fenton's Orchestra). The first is in blues time, the second almost a one-step.
- BRUN. 2950.—**You told me to go* (V.) and **Brown eyes, why are you blue?* (V.) (Carl Fenton's Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2958.—**I'm knee-deep in daisies* (V.) and **You gotta know how* (V.) (Park Lane Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2964.—**Bam, bam, bamy shore* and **Look who's here* (Paul Ash and his Orchestra). *Bamy shore* is in one-step time. The other tune is good in parts.
- BRUN. 2965.—**The farmer took another load away! Hay! Hay!* (V.) and **The King isn't king any more* (V.) (Carl Fenton's Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2967.—**What could be sweeter than you* and **The dance from down yonder* (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2970.—**The original Charleston* and **Sweet man* (Isham Jones Orchestra). The *Charleston* is played with splendid "go." *Sweet Man* is more subdued.
- BRUN. 2976.—**Sugar Plum* and **Promenade walk* (Herb. Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2980.—**Pretending* (V.) and **Everybody stomp* (Abe Lyman's California Orchestra). A fine band.
- BRUN. 2982.—**I want you all for me* (V.) and **Deep Elm* (V.) (Herb. Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra). Eccentricities in blues time.
- BRUN. 2983.—**I do! Do you?* (V.) and **Dreaming of to-morrow* (V.) (Paul Ash and his Orchestra).
- ACTUELLE 10978.—**The baby looks like me* (V.) and **Bah-Bah-Bartholomew* (V.) (the Star Syncopators).
- H.M.V. B.2258.—**Along the old lake trail* and **In the swim at Miami* (Jack Hylton).
- IMP. 1541.—**Hugo, I go where you go* (V.) (Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra) and **Angry* (Missouri Jazz Band).
- IMP. 1543.—**Bam, bam, bamy shore* (V.) (Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra) and **Normandy* (Imperial Dance Orchestra).
- IMP. 1544.—**Bah-Bah-Bartholomew* (V.) and **Araby* (Greening's Dance Orchestra).
- IMP. 1545.—**Cutie* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- ACO. G.15907.—**Ukulele Baby* (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "One-steps."
- PARLO. 5539.—**I wonder where my baby is to-night and Clap hands! Here comes Charley!* (the Goofus Five).
- PARLO. 5530.—**Toddle along* (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- H.M.V. B.2243.—**That certain party of mine* (V.) and **I wonder where my baby is to-night* (V.) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
- H.M.V. B.2249.—**Cutie* (V.) and **Down Paradise way* (V.) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
- ZONO. 2682.—**Naïla* and **Tannhäuser—Rhythmic Paraphrase* (Bert Firman's Dance Orchestra). This strikes me as being an opportunity missed.
- COL. 3864.—**Fooling* (V.) and **How's your folks and my folks* (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band).
- COL. 3883.—**Poppy* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Waltzes." Loud.
- H.M.V. B.2248.—**I've found a bud among the roses* (Kit-Cat Band) and see "Waltzes."
- VOC. X.9737.—**Who wouldn't love you* (V.) (the Night Club Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- VOC. X.9734.—**I wonder where my baby is to-night* (Don Parker and his Band) and see "Waltzes."
- ACO. G.15910.—**Kinky kids parade* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- H.M.V. B.2246.—**I love you* (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Waltzes." From *Betty in Mayfair*.
- PARLO. E.10420 (12in.).—**If you knew Susie* (Marek Weber and his famous Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- ACO. 15908.—**That's all there is and Keep your skirts down, Mary Ann* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).
- ACO. 15909.—**You forgot to remember and The bells of St. Mary's* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).
- ACO. 15911.—**Dream Pal* (Washington Dance Players) and **Bam, bam, bamy shore* (the Cleveland Society Orchestra).
- ZONO. 2681.—**Brown eyes, why are you blue?* and **Keep your skirts down, Mary Ann* (Bert Firman's Dance Orchestra).
- VOC. X.9733.—**My castles in Spain* and **I'm sitting on top of the world* (Don Parker and his Band). The first has mellow tones and is quite artistically played.
- VOC. X.9735.—**Everything is hotsy tots now* (V.) and **Where can I find you* (the Keystone Serenaders).
- VOC. X.9736.—**I'm knee-deep in daisies* and **Lonesome me* (the Keystone Serenaders).
- VOC. X.9738.—**Save your sorrow* (V.) and **Hearts and Flowers* (the Tuxedo Orchestra).
- VOC. X.9739.—**Oh, lovey, be mine* (V.) and **You told me to go* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra). Ben Selvin is difficult to rival for his verve.
- PARLO. 5534.—**Wildflower* and **Bambalina* (Markel's Orch.).
- PARLO. 5535.—**Show me the way to go home and Paddlin' Madelin' home* (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra). Vincent Lopez is not playing so well as of old.
- PARLO. 5536.—**The world is waiting for the sunrise and Oh! Boy, what a girl* (the Marlborough Dance Orchestra).
- PARLO. 5537.—**Everybody's doin' the Charleston now and Footloose* (the Parlophone Syncopators).
- PARLO. 5538.—**Them ramblin' blues* and *Sweet man* (the Goofus Five).
- PARLO. 5540.—**Ida, I do* (Jack Gardner's Orchestra) and **Mighty Blue* (the Melody Sheiks).
- COL. 3860.—**Over my shoulder and Lady of the Nile* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band).
- COL. 3863.—**Ukulele Baby* (V.) and **The Tin Can Fusiliers* (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band).
- COL. 3866.—**Is zat so?* (V.) and **Chick, chick, chick, chick, chicken* (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band).
- H.M.V. B.2245.—**Lonesome me and Don't wait too long* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). This *Lonesome* is easily the best of the tune.
- H.M.V.—**You got 'em and Headin' for home* (Kit-Cat Band). The Kit-Cat Band has first-class rhythm and plenty of "go".
- N.B.—In the above lists the titles of the best records are printed in heavy type (Clarendon), the titles printed above the line only in the list of each dance being in order of merit. The use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative merit.
- When only one band is mentioned in describing a record it means that both tunes are played by the same band. (V.) after the name of a tune indicates the presence of a vocal refrain, chorus, or accompaniment. All records are 10in. unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of makers' names are obvious.
- The prices of the records in the lists are as follows:—Aco.: 10in., 2s. 6d. Actuelle: 10in., 2s. 6d. Brunswick: 10in., 3s. Columbia: 10in., 3s. H.M.V.: 10in., 3s. Imperial: 10in., 2s. Parlophone: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d. Vocalion: 10in., 3s. Zonophone: 10in., 2s. 6d.
- * * *
- The following records arrived too late for a careful examination. Those marked with an asterisk are definitely good—the others have not been tested. Tangos, at last! There will be further mention of them next month.
- TANGO.
- H.M.V. B.2253.—**Vibraciones* and **Ingratitud* (V.) (Savoy Tango Orchestra).
- PARLO. R.3210.—**Sonsa* and **Fea* (The Orquesta Tipica).
- PARLO. R.3209.—**Por Ella* and **Callecita de mi Barrio* (the Orquesta Tipica).
- PARLO. R.3208.—**Silbando* and **Pobre Chica* (the Orquesta Tipica).
- PARLO. R.3207.—**Langosta* and **Paris* (the Orquesta Tipica).
- PARLO. R.3206.—**Cicatrices* and **Viejo Rincon* (the Orquesta Tipica).
- PARLO. R.3205.—**La Cuyanita* and **Muchachita de Montmartre* (the Orquesta Tipica).
- FOX-TROT.
- H.M.V. B.2252.—**I want a lovable baby and Brown eyes why are you blue* (the Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.2251.—**Waiting* and **In a little bungalow* (the Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.2250.—**I'm sitting on top of the world and Too too* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
- There is very little choice between the tangos—the playing is good, but the tunes are all very similar.

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Those whom it may concern are hereby informed that W. H. Weston is no longer on the staff of THE GRAMOPHONE.

Musical Teaching by Gramophone

It is in the third year's curriculum of the scheme advocated under the above heading in the *Times Educational Supplement* of January 2nd that the National Gramophonic Society is recommended, but the *Pianoforte Trio* of Schubert (Op. 100) "will provide an excellent beginning by reason of its simplicity" for the introduction of chamber music and miniature scores in the second year. In the third year "prominence should be given to chamber music For this purpose," says the anonymous writer, "the excellent series of the National Gramophonic Society, now entering on its second year of life, will be found not only well varied but well produced." This is high praise, coming from such a quarter; and the writer, to whom we are very grateful, ends his long and admirable article with these words: "Every school wishing to make the best of its instrument should subscribe to THE GRAMOPHONE, a monthly review carried on by Mr. Compton Mackenzie and a staff of technical experts and critics of standing, in which manufacturers' bulletins are published and the recorded works are analysed, while judgment is passed on the quality of the recording."

Is it true? Is it kind?

"Do you know that in the provinces musical taste has not developed at all in the last forty years?" asked Dame Nellie Melba at an interview reported in *The Observer* of January 10th. "London has made great strides. I think that Manchester and Liverpool, thanks to Hallé and the orchestral concerts they have had, are rather in advance of the others; and Glasgow has made good progress too. But in the provinces generally they won't learn anything new. They cannot get away from Tosti's *Goodbye, Down in the Forest*, and that awful song, the *Jewel Song* from *Faust*. It is sad."

A Gramophone Amplifier

The Marconiphone Company, Limited, is selling an electrical amplifying equipment for gramophones which is especially suited for large gatherings where a great volume of sound is needed. Those of our readers who were at the Caxton Hall Tests last summer will remember the demonstration of Mr. Arthur Cotton's electrical amplifier (August, p. 124); and those who have been privileged to witness the broadcasting of gramophone records at 2LO during the last nine months (see the note on p. 466 of Vol. II.) will appreciate the electro-magnetic system employed. All that is required is a turntable and a motor, a "gramophone reproducer" price £5, a Marconiphone Model P.7 Amplifier (two-valve) price £28 4s. complete with power valves and batteries, and a loud speaker or as many loud speakers as are required. No one who takes the slightest interest in the evolution of the gramophone should miss an opportunity of seeing and hearing this important development at 210, Tottenham Court Road.

Another Protractor

The Orchorsol Gramophone Co. have, rather unkindly, produced a "direct reading needle-track alignment indicator," which sounds complicated, but is really a simpler variant of the Wilson Protractor. To be perfectly just to it, let us say that it is more nearly fool-proof than the original Wilson Protractor which we keep in stock for our readers; and also it is quite adequate for the ordinary person who is uneasy about the alignment of his gramophone and wishes to know the worst. In fact, every one of our readers ought to possess a protractor of one sort or the other; and in maintaining that the Wilson Protractor (which we supply at 1s.) is more accurate and substantial than the Orchorsol protractor (which only costs 9d.) we recognise—let us be scrupulously fair—that the latter is good enough for the needs of eight people out of ten.

The Midland Musician

There is no need to be biased by good will towards our valued contributor, Mr. Sydney Grew, in order to recommend our new contemporary, the *Midland Musician*, which he is editing (6d. monthly) for the delectation of all interested in musical activities in the Midlands and as the official organ of the City of Birmingham Orchestra. Although we are not yet far advanced in 1926, it would hardly be an exaggeration to count Mr. Grew's new enterprise as the most important musical event of the year. The Editorial Offices are at 53, Barclay Road, Warley Woods, Birmingham.

Model Theatres and Opera

The British Model Theatre Guild is holding an exhibition of model theatres at the Faculty of Arts Gallery, 10, Upper John Street, Golden Square, at the end of this month (March 29th to April 10th), and the operatic section at any rate will interest all our readers within reach of London, where they will see perhaps the *Meistersinger* performed under "model" conditions with the use of gramophone records.

Orchestral Recording

Mr. John F. Porte writes:—"Several kindly-disposed readers have written to the writer concerning his article 'Orchestral Recording' in the February issue. Their main theme seems to be that the infamous *Entry of the Gods* record will sound perfectly well if only the writer will use a proper sound-box, a proper needle, a proper tone-arm, a proper amplifier, a proper track-alignment, a Lifebelt, etc., in short, a thoroughly perfect gramophone. The writer doubts none of the desirability of all these good things; but nothing can make the record in question sound correct, because its fault is fundamental. The orchestra was badly placed for recording and badly balanced for correct Wagnerian proportions. Moreover, trombones were substituted for the Wagner tubas. The performance was in concert fashion. The writer recommends *The Dawn over Valhalla*, conducted by Albert Coates (H.M.V., D.677), as giving a much nearer and better view of the scene. In this record the famous Wagner tubas are used."

The Musical Directory

It is hardly necessary to commend the seventy-fourth annual issue of "The Musical Directory," which is published by Messrs. Rudall, Carte and Co., Ltd., 23, Berners Street, London, W.1, at 6s. It covers the musical activities of the United Kingdom, and as a directory is invaluable to professionals and to the trade.

Polydor in English

A paragraph under this title last month ended with a complaint that "even the prices are still in German marks!" in the English catalogue of Classical and Modern Orchestral Music issued on Polydor records. Messrs. Alfred Imhof have pointed out that this is not true. The prices are not mentioned at all; we were misled by the "6 m" "4 m," etc., which refer to the size of the records.

The new H.M.V. Catalogue

Another volume comes from the Gramophone Co. to join its brown brothers on the catalogue shelf of every reader, the 1926 catalogue. How any man has the courage to undertake the rearrangement of such a catalogue is a matter for wonder; but Mr. Homewood has undertaken it as an occupation for spare moments in his glass house at 363, Oxford Street, and has made some notable improvements this year by incorporating the No. 2 Catalogue of historical records and by grouping the operas under their composers' names. These are the two things which strike one at a first glance; but this H.M.V. catalogue is a book to be browsed on at leisure, to be enjoyed with sympathy rather than with an eye eager for the detection of slips, and to be appreciated as one of the most remarkable monuments of cataloguing of modern times.

Aco Catalogue

There are about 1,550 titles in the 1926 Aco catalogue (up to and including November, 1925), all admirably arranged and printed on the same system as the Vocalion catalogue, so that the riches of these cheap records (12 inch, 4s.; 10 inch, 2s. 6d.) are seen at a glance as in a jeweller's window, not found after a long search or by chance. All is done sensibly, unostentatiously, and efficiently.

British Industries Fair

The White City has been full of the gramophone trade representatives from Feb. 15th to 26th; a good show which has led to good business. We congratulate everyone concerned, and beg to refer those who want to read all about it to the *Music Trades Review*, which has a full report.

National Gramophonic Society

N.G.S. Notes are unavoidably held over this month. A new brochure about the Society has been prepared, and members will help us greatly if they will send us the addresses of likely people to whom we may send it.

COMPETITIONS

Competitions have been neglected during the last few months and it is high time that we should entice the collective opinions of readers. We offer:—

A.—Three Pounds' Worth of Records (winner's choice) for the best list of *Six Pieces for Violin* which have not yet been recorded in an English catalogue. Each piece must be playable in four minutes or less.

B.—Three Pounds' Worth of Records (winner's choice) for the best Note in not more than 300 words on *The Lifebelt*. Readers who have already written letters on this subject are invited to repeat (or to modify) their views.

C.—For overseas readers only.—Three Pounds for the best essay in not more than 800 words on "What my gramophone and THE GRAMOPHONE have done for me."

Entries for A and B must reach the London Office, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, with the coupon on p.xxiv by March 31st.

Entries for C will be accepted up to May 31st. One coupon is sufficient for any or all of the competitions.

Rules to be observed:—

- (i) Write only on one side of the paper.
- (ii) Write your name and address clearly at the top of each sheet.
- (iii) In A give the approximate time of playing. In B and C mark every 100 words.

The Editor's decision is final and he reserves the right to publish any of the matter sent in. In the case of Competition C any of the essays published will be paid for at our usual rates.

"The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

RATES.—Advertisements are accepted for this section at the rate of twopence per word with a minimum charge of two shillings. The advertiser's name and address will be charged for, and single letters and single figures will be counted as words. Compound words will be counted as two words. All advertisements must be prepaid in the form of postal orders or cheques addressed to The Advertisement Manager, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, LONDON, W.1. Should the advertiser desire his announcement to be addressed to a box number, c/o THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W.1 (which address—six words—must, of course, be paid for at the ordinary rate of twopence per word), 6d. extra for the forwarding of replies must be sent.

FOR SALE

BRUNSWICK Cliftophone records (new) nearly a complete Beatalogue. Offers.—FOORD, 737, LONDON ROAD, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.

FOR SALE. Patent No. 193727—1922. Improvements in Diaphragms in connection with Gramophone Machines. Tortoise-shell diaphragms.—APPLY, R. E. BOZON, 883, FULHAM ROAD, S.W. 6.

GRAMOPHONE. All issues to date. Vol. 1 bound. Editor's Autograph, perfect order. Cash offers.—HAMILL, 3, CURZON ROAD, KERSAL, MANCHESTER.

LATEST Pattern Vitz Orchestrated Sound-box—2 guineas or offer.—ORR, ELM HOUSE, HILLINGDON.

MISCELLANEOUS Records, H.M.V., Columbia Celebrity, and others; one-third price. List on application.—POINTIN, SUNNYSIDE, LANCASTER AVENUE, NEWCASTLE.

MUSIC Master Mahogany Horn 21in. diameter, H.M.V. fitting.—WRITE BOX H, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W. 1.

SALE. "Petruschka," "Emperor" Concerto, Beethoven Violin Concerto. All complete. Good condition.—Box 2872, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W. 1.

SCHUBERT'S Pianoforte Trio and Schönberg's String Sextet—"Verklärte Nacht," N.G.S., eight records, played twice.—BM/BB3B, LONDON, W.C. 1.

SIXTY per cent. under list. Records in guaranteed condition. All good music, list stamped envelope.—Box F, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W. 1.

SOUND-BOXES. No blast, no backfire, and therefore no damage to records. Brilliant tone, improved definition. Two years' guarantee.—SOLE MANUFACTURERS, RAMSDEN-GREEN, LTD., WAGNER STREET, LONDON, S.E. 15.

THE GRAMOPHONE, from No. 1 to present number. Perfect condition; unbound. 25s.—DALEY, 3, PADDENSWICK ROAD, HAMMERSMITH.

VOLUME 1. All numbers except 4. Vol. 2 complete.—WRITE, B/M.BBTJ, LONDON, W.C. 1.

WANTED

LUPPI (Fonotipia) Records; good condition.—POTTER, 4, ROSTHWAITE ROAD, WEST DERBY, LIVERPOOL.

THE GRAMOPHONE, 1925, complete or Nos. 8 to 12 inclusive.—Box 2897, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W. 1.

WANTED. Large spun-brass seamless horn as formerly made by Messrs. Imhof for H.M.V. Horn Machines. Full size 24in. across bell, 27in. long.—K. SORABJI, 175, CLARENCE GATE GARDENS, N.W. 1.

MISCELLANEOUS

GRAMOPHONE Maker's Business in the City. This machine is well known and is second to none. Will sell, or arrange partnership or limited company. Capital required will be only small.—APPLY, KNAPMAN & BUCKINGHAM, ACCOUNTANTS, 24/27, ROOD LANE, E.C. 3.

ODEON, Vox, Fonotipia Records (new). All arias from Mozart's greatest operas. Splendid statuettes, busts, portraits of composers.—MUSIC SALON, 133A, GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH.